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THE

WIFE.

A NOVEL.

M. and S. Brooke, Printers,
Paternoster-Row, London.

THE

WIFE.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By MARIA BENSON,

Author of "Thoughts on Education."

"I have, when soliloquising or communing with my own thoughts, been ready to exclaim, Who is the faithful friend of man—is it not woman? Without her affectionate assiduity how would he be preserved through the dangers attendant on the helpless state of infancy? Is she not equally to be regarded as the cheering companion in youth, the friend and consoler through middle life?—Lastly, the endearing partner who soothes the infirmities of age, and tends to ward off the attacks of disease by attentions which mitigate pain, though they cannot wholly banish it. —To sum up all—Is she not the friend that is nearer than a *brother*, who supports that pillow on which the wearied head seeks to find repose when on the very verge of eternity."

"*Thoughts and Remarks on establishing an Institution for the support and Education of unportioned respectable Females.*"—By Helena Whitford.

Vol. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1810.

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TO

MR. BENSON,

ACKWORTH, YORKSHIRE.

WILL you, honoured Sir, crown this Dedication with that approving smile which beamed on the following pages when they first met your eye, seven years ago; under the parental roof, they first saw the light; there fostered by the kind encouragement which they received from you, I was induced to think of ushering them into the world.

Thrown there amongst strangers, they may, perhaps, with their author, be

doomed to find, that *home* only is the resort of love and peace, and certainly the safest, happiest province for a "WIFE." Exposed to the cold criticisms of those, who deem it a mark of excellence to point out foibles and "cry what stuff is here," or the bitter sarcasms of such, as have not traced me through all the stages of that world which, even to the most fortunate, exhibits a mingled scene of "good and ill together." I may perhaps be tempted to exclaim—Would that by pursuing the noiseless tenor of my way through the sequestered vales of private life, I had deprived my enemies of the satisfaction of knowing that I have written a book. It was not however to gratify their spleen, I confess, that the work which gives rise to this address was composed.

You are well acquainted with my motives for such an exertion of my pen, with all the circumstances which called those motives into action, and if you are satisfied, I may say, with respect to a worldly tribunal, as Medea said to her confidante, "It is enough." But should one sentiment of mine be found sufficiently powerful to check vice in its progress, or soothe virtue in affliction, I shall feel more than satisfied. I shall bow in gratitude to my Heavenly Father for the few talents committed to my care, whilst to my earthly parent I express my ardent thanks for those advantages which were, during a long course of years, so liberally bestowed upon me; advantages which *few* perhaps ever possessed in so extensive a degree, though *many* have profited by

them more. Farewell, my dear Sir, regret not my humble offering, because it is humble, but accept it because it is sincere. None can appreciate it so fully as yourself, none therefore would value it so highly.—That the evening of your days may be peaceful, and the dawning of eternity beam with lustre upon you, is the prayer of, your truly affectionate daughter,

MARIA BENSON.

London, Feb. 20, 1810.

INTRODUCTION.

IT may, perhaps, by some of my readers, be thought that I should not introduce a Wife into society without those preliminary observations on her character which might give her a claim to its notice and acceptance; but should I point out her defects, it may be enquired of me, why, when you formed her mind, did you not form it better? Should I expatiate on her virtues, I might be charged with the same impertinent egotism which attaches to the mother, when, unsought and unwished for, she obtrudes

on her friends the praises of a darling child, whose merits none but herself are ready to acknowledge; silence, then, on the present occasion will become me best, as to that particular point which the public will, no doubt, assert the privilege of discussing for themselves; but it may not perhaps be wholly unnecessary to enlarge in some degree, on my motives for the publication of a work classed under the general title of "Novel." The rage for reading this description, be it an evil in society or not, a question which remains to be discussed by abler pens than mine, has certainly increased, nor is it likely to be diminished by any means hitherto effectually ascertained. Such, then, being the state of society, and such its views, engendered no doubt by the frivolity

and lightness of female education, that individual merits praise rather than condemnation, who, finding that the torrent cannot be restrained, endeavours to direct its windings into a plainer channel, and if she cannot lead the mind to higher views, and more exalted pursuits than those to which it may have directed itself, to render the food from which it draws its supplies, *innocent*, if not *invigorating*. Since writing the accompanying work some years ago, a valuable publication fell into my hands, from which I have extracted my motto, and the theory of which, if ever reduced to practice, may lesson the race of novel readers, and novel writers; but until such a system, as that proposed by the author, be fully established, which shall embrace a better mode of education on a

national plan than has hitherto been adopted, the national taste, and consequently that of individuals, must remain the same. For though valuable sentiments may be conveyed under a novel form, and sterling characters held forth, it is not the species of reading which a judicious mother could recommend to her daughters, because it too frequently leads the mind to a world not its own, and serves to unsettle it in that where Providence has placed it.

CHAPTER I.

"Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly Sage sometimes declaimed of right and wrong: he taught truths as refined as Athens ever heard; and (strange to tell!) he practiced what he preached."

"SUCH were not the precepts of your honoured father," said the venerable Hanbury, as he addressed himself to a young man, who had the preceding year been committed to his guardianship.

"These are maxims which may pass current in the fashionable world, where intrinsic merit seldom gains reception, and would not be valued if it did; but be assured they are weak and feeble guides in the intricate mazes of life, and inadequate to impart one gleam of comfort in that hour, when the past will arise in bitter recurrence, and the future teem

with doubt and despair. It is a fatal mistake which the young men of this day are labouring under, that, in order to be admired and distinguished, they must throw off respect for the sacred doctrines of religion. I trust this delusion will only prove temporary, with you, Charles; and that I may not, in despite of my regard to the memory of your valuable parent, have cause to lament that the duty of attempting to convince, where conviction could not penetrate, was, in a fatal hour, bequeathed to me." Charles bowed his head slightly, and withdrew.

A task indeed of no easy nature, had devolved on Mr. Hanbury, in the charge of a young man, whose mind had been tinctured, though not vitiated, with the follies of his associates, and whose principles had been assailed, though not quite undermined, by their pernicious maxims. His father had been the patron, and early friend of Mr. Hanbury. On the one side,

the friendship arose from the love of virtue, and respect for talents, which, in Mr. Hanbury, were both united; on the other, from gratitude, (that purest source of human affection) which he owed to Mr. Greville in an extensive degree. The time had now arrived, in consequence of the death of his friend, when Mr. Hanbury was to prove, by his exertions for the welfare of the children, the sincerity and strength of his professions towards their father.

This son and a daughter were the only offspring of an union which had been neither long nor happy. Mr. Greville's connection with his wife was founded on motives which would not bear the test of experience. Her beauty had captivated his heart. She was extremely young, and much attached to him; hence he hoped to mould her character to his wishes. Time shewed the fallacy of his reasoning, and proved how much more to the comfort of both it would have

been, if he had chosen a companion for life on more rational principles.

After some years of discord on her part, and misery on his, she died, leaving him two children, the young man to whom we have just introduced our Readers, and a daughter who has yet to make her entré into the scenes which the following pages present.

Jessica Greville, at the particular request of her mother, had hitherto been allowed to reside with her family, from whom, after again resigning her into their care, Mr. Hanbury was just returned, for she had lately gone into Essex to pay the last melancholy duties to her only surviving and now deceased parent; to her that tie in its most endearing sense has been unknown, she had been deprived of the advantages that flow from the society and example of a wise and anxious mother, and only in its nominal sense had she been acquainted with the title; her father, from a too rigid

compliance with the request of her mother, had deprived her of the solace of having at least one parent, and thus was she thrown upon the stormy sea of life without any friendly pilot to guide her through the shoals and quicksands of a long and perhaps tempestuous voyage. Her disposition, though quick to feel an injury, was ever ready to forgive it, and though gifted with sensibility to pity the misery of others, and, pitying, to relieve wherever she discovered it, her mind was armed with that fortitude to bear unrepining its own, which is sometimes only the result of frequent disappointment, and long experience; in her this arose from neither, but was rather the offspring of those reflections which her comfortless situation had often excited: the world had not presented itself to her view with that aspect which it generally wears to young minds, and having never known those fond endearments that alone render it fascinating, she looked

forward rather with an anxiety to bear the calamities of life, than with the hope of a happiness which might only prove visionary.

Her mind was uniformly composed, though not in any degree tinctured with melancholy, but she was now suffering that excess of sorrow, which the sudden death of her father had produced. In her occasional visits to him, he had shewn himself affectionate to her, and indulgent to her little foibles, and she thus mourned more than ever that promise which had torn her from him, and thrown her amongst those whom she could neither esteem or respect, who were alike regardless of her principles, and unmindful of her faults. But for the paternal counsel of the worthy Hanbury, with whom, when on her visits to her father, she had sometimes resided, the request of her weak and erring mother had indeed proved a fatal calamity. To Mr. Hanbury she looked forward in the

present emergency for advice and assistance; she had suffered much from that irregularity of conduct which she had witnessed in her brother, and her sole hope now rested on the exertions of her friend, to save her from the misery which she feared was yet to come.

Her person, like her mind, had been left in great part to form itself, and, though graceful in the extreme, was not so much indebted to studied attention as to nature. Her face was fine, without being beautiful, and yet such was the feeling which its expression excited, that none who saw it would have wished it exchanged for beauty; in every turn of her countenance you read the emotion of her mind, whether animated by hope, or sinking under the pressure of sorrow. Her first effusions of grief having subsided, she wrote to Mr. Hanbury, expressing her gratitude for his former attentions; her willingness to regard him as a parent; her intreaties that he

would look upon her as a child; that with his affection he would mingle reproof when her failings required its correction, and that he would continue to regard her as a relick of her departed father.

His answer was at once soothing and indicative of that attachment which lives beyond the grave; in Mr. Hanbury, professions and actions were the same, he never had professed that which he did not feel, consequently his actions were the result of what he professed.

To Jessica his assurances of friendship and protection would never have been more opportune, or more consoling, than at that period in which they arrived; she had returned to the house of Lady Stanhope, her feelings bowed down by a weight of grief, returned to the abode of folly, condemned to reside with a woman whose principles were repugnant to her's, and whose conduct she decidedly disapproved.

"Too weak to reason and too vain to think," Lady Stanhope had been educated as most women of fashion are; she had married early in life a man whose dissipated habits had allowed him neither time or inclination to correct her follies, had he been capable of such an Herculean labour; and his death, at a period when her beauty was yet in its meridian, and his fortune unimpaired, had given her the power of displaying those follies in a wider field; such was the guardian to whose care the poor Jessica had been committed. Her compliments of condolence to her niece, when she first saw her, after her return from that journey in which she had seen the remains of her father deposited in the grave, were cold and common-place: the delicate refinements of feeling were to her unknown, and the sacred light in which the sorrow of a fellow-creature should be held in moments like these, she was equally a stranger to. She asked various questions

relative to her neice's melancholy journey, and being satisfied respecting them, she retired and left her to her own reflections. Comfortless indeed were those when she viewed the situation in which she was placed: Mr. Hanbury was, however, the friendly star which seemed destined to guide her on her dark and bewildered path, and her gratitude to that worthy man was only equalled by her present sorrow. It was true, indeed, that in the provision made for her by her father, she was raised above want, but the thoughtless conduct of her brother excited her fears that her little patrimony, even added to his own, might be found insufficient to supply his extravagancies, and, independent of these her fears, her sad heart acknowledged the bitter conviction that there are many sources of unhappiness which, on this side the grave, we cannot avert, yet which the mind must sensibly feel.

CHAPTER II.

Hither he came a wan and weary guest,
A softening balm for many a wound to crave,
And woo'd the sunshine to his aching breast,
Which now seems smiling on his verdant grave.

BOWLES.

It was with great regret that Jessica learnt, on the following morning, the intention of Lady Stanhope to leave Belmont, her present place of residence, in the course of the ensuing week; she had fixed her journey to Bath on the 20th, in order to be at an approaching ball, where it was expected that most of those who had a claim to fashion amongst her acquaintance, would assemble; respecting this arrangement Jessica had no alternative, for in the proposal, or rather the order, to accompany her aunt, none was

offered; she prepared to be of her party without repining, though solitude would have been more congenial to her feelings, and more consistent with her situation; but Lady Stanhope, unused to consider propriety in her own conduct, was regardless of it in others, and Jessica was now beginning to acquire patient submission and suffering under those vexations, to which the caprice and folly of her aunt rendered her hourly liable, and though it would have been a luxury in the present moments to indulge her virtuous sorrow, yet she unrepiningly yielded to circumstances which she had not the power to controul, and consoled herself with the reflection that, even in the midst of the gay and thoughtless, she could cherish the remembrance of her departed father, which now returned to her with peculiar force.

It was only one year since she had travelled with him the rout she was going to retrace, as she had been his companion

to Bath, whither he went for the recovery of his health. In endeavouring to solace and comfort him at that period, she had been gratified by his thanks, and the approbation of her own heart.

The canker-worm of care and secret grief had preyed upon her father's heart; disappointed in his marriage which he had fondly hoped would have proved a lasting comfort, he had relied on his children to soothe and enliven the evening of his days. He had looked forward to Charles as his own support, and the future protector of his sister; there too his hopes had proved deceptious, and he at length sunk under the load of accumulated evils. "What a train of anxieties and sorrows have the last twelve months produced, and how grateful ought we to be that the future is not disclosed to us; oh, my father, you rest in that mansion where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest; may your daughter emulate your virtues, and oh,

may she be spared the calamities which awaited you in your path through life."

Such were the aspirations and reflections of the uncorrupted heart and unsophisticated mind of Jessica, as she entered that place where she had passed so many hours of happiness and instruction, that could never return.

On the day after her arrival in Bath, she went out in order to revisit some of her favourite walks; here she met a variety of faces, but all were strangers to her; she saw none who approached her with the smile of friendship, all seemed occupied in their own pursuits; even the place itself seemed different to her, but she forgot that her own heart was changed.

After returning from her walk, she was cheared by a letter from her worthy friend Mr. Hanbury; the passage in which he said, "Your brother's head is only in error, his heart unquestionably is not wanting," seemed to compensate for every previous anxiety; he informed

her that Charles had that morning set out for Oxford, and that he was indulging the hope that his admonitions were not wholly thrown away, but that "in casting his bread upon the waters he should find it after many days."

CHAPTER III.

"What an extravagant dominion does pleasure exercise over us? It is not only the pestilence that walketh in darkness, but an arrow that destroyeth at noon day."

YOUNG.

WE now return to Charles, who, after leaving Mr. Hanbury with many promises of amendment, which had been rather extorted than voluntarily given, arrived at Oxford, negligent and without reflection as to the past, and only looking forward to the approaching period when, being under no restraint, he might enjoy his wild schemes without admonition or controul.

This young man had never shewn any instance in his conduct that amounted to absolute depravity of heart, but his whole life hitherto had proved one series

of error and repentance. With a moderate fortune from his father, which he had happily no present power to dissipate, and an eager desire for company, in the choice of which he was not very discriminate, he was now perhaps placed in the most unfortunate of all situations, where every mad propensity would meet with encouragement, and his morals sustain a total wreck. He had letters of recommendation to some of the most respectable characters in the University; after delivering which in person, and receiving general invitations to their houses and rooms, he returned to his college, with the hope of meeting with companions more congenial, and he did not hope in vain. There were many there of the same disposition as himself, whom he met with at commons the following day, and after having passed with eclat through the ordinary quizzisms bestowed on a fresh man, he was dubbed by the fraternity a very honest fellow.

At the head of this society was a youth of the name of Davenport, whom he selected from the rest as his chosen companion, and, in return for this mark of distinction, was initiated by him into all the mysteries of the squad, such as quizzing the old fellows, bribing the porter, and being absent without leave.

He was soon sent for by the master of the college, who, after giving him some general advice as to his conduct, dismissed him; but this was a ceremony which his companions informed him it was usual to go through, and it left no permanent impression on his mind; every night was passed in some excess, and every day brought a reprimand with it. Three weeks had nearly elapsed, and not one single line had he written to Mr. Hanbury, the man whom he was henceforth to look upon as a father, and who was so kindly solicitous for his welfare, whom he had left in a very indifferent state of health; but such are the effects

that dissipation produces on the mind which it engrosses, that it weakens alike every affectionate and moral tie.

A letter from Mr. Hanbury, reminding him of the failure of his duty, would have roused him to some returning sense of it, but that a party of pleasure interfered. The letter was thrown aside to be answered on some future day, but week after week elapsed, and its contents were forgotten. At length the tutor sent, requesting to speak with him; and, after some remonstrances on the impropriety of his late conduct, told him that he had received a letter from Mr. Hanbury, who desired to be informed how he spent his time in college, as he had never written to give him any account of his proceedings. Charles returned to his own room, where, for the first time since his entrance into this scene of profligacy and dissipation, he suffered himself to reflect. He now wrote a few lines, as much to prevent further importunity as to satisfy his own

conscience, which, amidst all his efforts to stifle its monitions, would sometimes be felt.

About this time a tour was proposed by one of the party who had some friends in Wales, where he was anxious to go; Charles, who was eager to embrace every scheme that promised pleasure, agreed to accompany him; they were absent a fortnight, during which time the tutor of the college, making diligent enquiries after Charles, and not hearing of him, made his appeal to the master, who, on his re-appearing, sent for him, and reprehended him in the most serious manner. After charging him with being absent from college without leave, he proceeded to inform him, that were the circumstances proved, he must certainly be under the necessity of expelling him. Charles however pleaded ignorance of the necessary forms of soliciting permission of absence, and, after many promises of never transgress-

ing the rules in a similar manner, the master dismissed him. What proficiency he had however already attained to in the hackneyed art of lying, the following incident will prove. After he returned to his room, he was visited by some of his companions, who were eager to know how he had escaped from the late formidable attack: Oh, said he, on being interrogated on the subject, I came off with flying colours; when the Old Boy attacked me on my absence, pray Sir, I replied, how are you convinced that I was absent, or that I was not in my own rooms the whole of this fortnight? Because Mr. Greville, your tutor, called to make an enquiry after you, and was informed that you were absent. Will you allow me, Sir, to interrogate my servant on this occasion? the fellow was then called. I understand, said I, that you have lately informed persons who called at my rooms, that I was out; pray what authority had you to assert this? Why,

Sir, I searched in your rooms, and I could not find you, so I supposed you were not not there; and pray where did you search? Why I looked in both rooms, and then in a large chest, and in the bed. Humph! that was all very well as far as you went, but you ought to have searched under the bed; and, turning to the Old Boy, I assure you, I said, that it was there that, very much indisposed, I passed the whole fortnight. It was in vain, you know, after this cool specimen of my effrontery, to endeavour to look composed, and so he once more dismissed me with a lecture.

CHAPTER IV.

Friendship, mysterious cement of the soul,
Thou bond of peace and solder of society,
I owe thee much.— BLAIR.

JESSICA, in the mean time, had been suffering much anxiety from never having heard of her brother since his arrival in Oxford, and her anxiety was much heightened by having received a letter from Mr. Hanbury mentioning to her his intention of going abroad in consequence of the declining state of his health. He hinted at the pleasure he should receive from her society whilst on the continent, if she would not deem the sacrifice too great, and concluded by naming the south of France as the place whither he designed to go.

This plan was extremely consonant with the wishes of Jessica, who was already so much wearied with her present place of abode, that any change seemed preferable to it which offered a a gleam of comfort. She mentioned Mr. Hanbury's proposal to lady Stanhope, who, too much engrossed by her own pursuits to be very solicitous respecting the situation or affairs of her neice, told her that she was at perfect liberty to reply to the letter in what terms she thought the most proper.

Since their arrival at Bath, the mode of employing their time had been so very different that scarcely had they met, except when lady Stanhope was surrounded by company, and no particular conversation could take place.

In her conduct towards Jessica, lady Stanhope never manifested any degree of affection, but that was not surprising, as she was incapable of such a feeling to-

wards any one; but Jessica thought she discovered in her aunt's behaviour on this occasion, and, in the cold indifference which displayed itself, something of an anxiety to be freed from the charge of her, and the responsibility resulting from it.

Jessica wrote to her venerable friend the same post, expressing her wishes to attend him on his voyage, and lamenting the cause that rendered it necessary.

To her it was indeed of serious magnitude, her knowledge of the world was confined, her commerce with it had been hitherto extremely limited; whilst under the roof of lady Stanhope she had scarcely met with one person whose society could have been either pleasant to her in her hours of happiness, or have afforded any degree of benefit or comfort in those less prosperous. In her visits to her father, whose society was chiefly with persons of his own sex, she had met with none really valuable, excepting

this friend, from whom she might now be soon separated for ever; and the narrowness of her fortune having rendered her less an object of attention than in other circumstances she might have proved, her society had not been courted; of those who valued merit for its own sake, Jessica had hitherto known but one.

All her anxiety now was called forth on Mr. Hanbury's account, and she prepared for her departure to him with that alacrity which we feel when we are about to meet those whom we fondly love.

At length the day arrived on which she was to set out, and taking leave of lady Stanhope, she commenced her journey into Cumberland.

On her arrival at the house of Mr. Hanbury she was much shocked on observing his altered appearance: their meeting was affectionate, but her heart was too full for words, and the impression which the emaciated looks of her

friend made upon her was too visible to be overlooked.

"I shall leave this place in a few days, my young friend," said Mr. Hanbury as they sat at breakfast the following morning; "you are very kind to leave your friends for so long a time, to become an exile from your country with an old man like me, whose company can promise you no compensation; and perhaps your kindness may have prompted a sacrifice which I had no claim to ask: you may perhaps be leaving some one who has a peculiar interest in your not quitting England." Jessica smiled, and assured him that that was not the case; that except himself she had only yet met with one person who had honoured her with more than common attention, and that him in all probability she might never meet more, since his attentions he well knew had not been pleasant to her.

Though Jessica's residence at Bath

had been short, her manner of living retired, yet she had not entirely escaped admiration. Modest in her appearance and unobtrusive in her manners, it was her only desire to be suffered to remain in quiet, and pass unnoticed; unlike the young women by whom she was surrounded; who were eager for admiration, and panted after the unmeaning incense offered by coxcombs, not as a tribute which they conceived just, but which it was expected they should pay.

She had, however, been singled out during her residence there by a young man, singular in his deportment and eccentric in his manners, though of large fortune and respectable character; and whom she now found, to her great surprise, occasionally resided in Mr. Hanbury's neighbourhood, where it was expected he would soon arrive.

After breakfast Mr. Hanbury proposed that they should call on some acquaintances of his in the adjoining town,

and Jessica, happy to see him so chearful, readily acceded.

The lady of the house they should first call at, he informed her, was universally esteemed a very sensible woman, and he hoped that her society would prove an acquisition whilst they remained in England.

But before we proceed, it may not be improper to give our readers a sketch of the characters to whom we are about to introduce them. Mr. Ramsey was in sentiment an avowed republican; whilst he affected a liberality of opinion, like republicans in general, he was a petty tyrant, for no despotic monarch ever yet exercised greater power over his subjects than was exhibited in the household of this son of liberty; with an affectation of knowing all things, he literally knew nothing, and whilst he talked of freedom, the love of power was his darling principle. In short, to sum up his character in the words of

that great biographer, Johnson, in speaking of Milton, he hated monarchs in the state and prelates in the church, for he hated all whom he was required to obey. Mrs. Ramsey was a woman of most insinuating manners, and very superior abilities, united to an uncommon degree of penetration in discovering the weaknesses of those around her, and rendering them subservient to her own plans: but she generally chose her associates amongst those of inferior understanding; by this means she gratified her thirst for admiration, whilst she maintained the reputation of being a very uncommon woman. Her manners were extremely graceful, and in forming her mind there had been no exertion wanted.

She received Jessica on her first introduction to her with that studied politeness, which, though she could sometimes throw aside, she generally wore in the presence of strangers, and

on taking leave of her, requested she would renew her visit on an early day.

The following morning Jessica found, from a conversation with Mr. Hanbury, that he would be under the necessity of deferring his voyage for a few weeks, in consequence of some affairs relative to her own and her brother's property, and that he feared he should be obliged leave Oak Hanger for some days.

"Your brother," said he, "Jessica, is near the termination of his minority, and it is my desire to leave his affairs settled in so clear a manner that no disputes may hereafter arise. I may never return to England, and in that case it will relieve my mind from some part of its load, to reflect that I have, in fulfilling my duty, discharged a part of that debt of gratitude which I owe to the memory of your father. You are not perhaps acquainted with the extent of my obligations to that valuable man: sometime you shall hear my history, and have new

cause to revere his character, but I am not in my present state quite equal to the task of reciting past sorrows and recalling regrets which ought long since to have subsided; they will soon cease in that grave to which an old man, like me, must be fast verging."

"My dear sir," said Jessica, "do not thus agitate yourself with talking of the past, but look forward to the enjoyment of that returning health which I trust will await you in the mild breezes of a southern shore, and be assured we shall yet spend many happy hours together." Had Mr. Hanbury observed her countenance when she said this, he would have seen there much more to fear than to hope.

The next morning they were visited by Mrs. Ramsey, who proposed to Jessica to join their party to the Lakes, whither they were going in the course of a few days. Mr. Hanbury seemed very desirous that she should do so, as during

that time he should be under the necessity of leaving her alone, and she consented to the proposal.

When the day was fixed for their excursion she found however, to her infinite mortification, that her Bath admirer was to make one of the party; he had returned to that part of the country a few days before, and learning that Jessica was expected to accompany Mrs. Ramsey, readily accepted an invitation to join them: Jessica found that she could not avoid fulfilling her engagement without the appearance of caprice, and was obliged, though unwillingly, to acquiesce.

CHAPTER. V.

Cool breath'd the grateful air, and freer now
The fragrance of the autumnal leaves arose,
The passing gale scarce mov'd the overhanging bough,
And not a sound disturb'd the deep repose,
Save when a falling leaf came fluttering by,
Save the near brooklet stream that murmered quietly.

When Jessica got to Mr. Ramsey's on the following day, the party was assembled, and in addition to Mr. Compton, who seemed much pleased that this opportunity was afforded him of renewing his acquaintance with her, she was introduced to a Mr. Evans, who was also to accompany them.

The day was uncommonly fine, and they set out immediately in order to be at the Lakes to view the sun set; they travelled slowly, for the weather was

intensely hot, and occasionally made pauses on the road to admire the surrounding scenery.

It was now the latter end of August, and the richly variegated tints of autumn were beginning to diffuse themselves over the woods, through which they passed.

Jessica anticipated with pleasure the fine scenes through which she should wander in the country where she was shortly going, which her present journey reminded her of; and whilst she contemplated the beauties of nature, her heart was lifted up to nature's God.

Her meditations were interrupted by hearing the voice of Compton, who, on their passing a cottage, had observed a woman spinning at the door, and broke forth into expressions of admiration on her employment. "How have we degenerated," said he, "from the virtue and simplicity of our forefathers! There was a time, when the females of high

rank thought it not derogatory to spin their own garments. O Penelope! how have thy daughters fallen!"

"*Why*, Sir," interrupted Mr. Evans, "if the ladies were to employ themselves in spinning, where would be the encouragement to industry amongst the poor?—*and all trades must live.*"

"Trade, Sir! I was speaking of persons, whose minds soar'd above the low and vulgar occupations of trade." "But," interrupted Mrs. Ramsey, "if the women of this day managed their web no better than Penelope, the world would not be much benefited by such artificers."

They had by this time arrived at the place where they intended to rest for an hour or two, during the heat of the day, in order to be enabled to encounter the fatigue of a long ride, and a ramble, when they reached the termination of their journey: here they dined, and whilst the ladies were making some

alteration in their dress, the gentlemen went out to view the prospects around.

When they returned, Mr. Evans informed Jessica, that he and Mr. Compton had had a violent dispute respecting a horse.

For his part, he observed, he had no idea of making such a fuss about animals, and treating them as if they were *Christians.*

At this moment Mr. Compton entered.

"Sir," said he, "a horse is a noble animal, and was particularly prized by the ancients; all heroes have had a veneration for horses, and I never see myself seated on my lofty charger, but I think of Charles the Twelfth, of Sweden, at the head of his troops."

"Well well, Sir, all this may be very right, but there is no occasion to be so very particular about them; now it was only a few minutes since you would not suffer the hostler, who, I dare say, knows his business very well, to draw some

water for your horse, but drew it yourself, which was a very surprising thing for a gentleman to do, and what I am sure your servant would have huffed at and thought beneath him."

"Beneath him, Sir, do you think it degrading to draw water, do you think it beneath any man to do what, in the time of the Patriarchs, kings daughters employed themselves in? do not we read of their assembling themselves at springs and drawing from thence that wholesome and precious beverage."—

Evans, too much astonished to make any reply, turned to the window, and in a few minutes after dinner was served. After which Mrs. Ramsey proposed a walk to Jessica, and the gentlemen were left to renew the disputes of the morning or discuss new topics.

On their return, they proceeded on their journey, and reached the place proposed in the evening. As they travelled along the borders of the lakes Jessica

contemplated the majesty of the scene with sublime admiration. The sun, throwing its departing beams along the water, over the surface of which hung rocks, whose height appeared to render them almost inaccessible.

She wished much for Mr. Hanbury, his taste for, natural beauties being so congenial to her own. When the party arrived at the house which was prepared for their reception, they were all much fatigued, and soon after separated. And the following morning when they met, Mr. Ramsey proposed a fishing party.

"For my part," said Evans, "I am no fisher, and I have often gone out with people, but I can't say, except the fishermen who are brought up with it, I ever saw any body that understood much of the matter."

"But I, Sir," answered Mr. Ramsey, "which you probably may not know, was placed by my father with a fisherman, and was for many years regularly

instructed in the method of fishing." Here Jessica observed a shrug of contempt in Mrs. Ramsey, who was however too indignant to make any other reply to the last observation, but that she believed Mr. Ramsey's knowledge in that branch was equal to what he possessed in many others.

Here Evans, who did not seem perfectly to comprehend this observation in its full import, looking respectfully at Mrs. Ramsey, said, " I dare say, madam, Mr. Ramsey is very clever in most things, I am sure I was not doubting his knowledge, but as to fishing when fish can be bought so cheap, I think it's spending one's time and tiring oneself for very little use."

" Tiring yourself," said Compton, " and do you, Sir, complain of fatigue in such puerile amusements, and forget the exertions of the Spartans! were not the youth of that illustrious country early inured to hardship, and so educated as to

look with contempt on every species of personal danger and fatigue; and have you forgot too the atchievements of the glorious Hannibal, who, despising such low considerations, marched with his troops in the midst of swamps and morasses, over clifts and mountains, through subterraneous passages; and who, after dissolving the rocks by his superior powers, in this order entered Italy."

"Hannibal was a fool," rejoined Mr. Ramsey, "he did not understand the principles of chemistry; it is a science which has undergone considerable improvement; I made it my particular study for many years," and as to the hardships you speak of, I hope you are not credulous enough to be imposed upon by all the lies which the ancients tell you."

"Sir," said Compton, rising with indignation, "a lie was esteemed a crime at the virtuous period to which I allude,

and was held in the ancient code of laws punishable by death."

"Well, if I may give my opinion," replied Evans, "I never saw any great hardships the soldiers had to bear, and as for fatigue, I never heard them complain, except sometimes, when they were quartered in our town, the soldiers would say they were tired after our weekly hop."—

"Hop! and pray do you think then," said Compton, "that those great and wise people of whom I speak ever descended to such effeminate pursuits? Why, Sir, there have been nations, the Grecians for instance, who esteemed dancing a vice."

"Well," exclaimed Evans, "I can only say that these ancients must have been rather odd people, for I can't see the great difference betwixt dancing and drawing water, only that I think dancing is the most agreeable of the two."

Mrs. Ramsey, now anxious to terminate this dispute, proposed to set out, and after engaging a boat for the purpose of fishing, they embarked. Mr. Compton placed himself next Jessica, and seemed solicitous to engage her attention, but the novelty of the scene, and the surrounding objects, wholly engrossed her thoughts. Mrs. Ramsey observed, that a boat had always appeared to her an ingenious piece of mechanism. "My dear," said Mr. Ramsey, "do not betray your ignorance by talking on subjects you do not understand. Perhaps the world does not exhibit a peice of mechanism more simple in its construction. I was with a boat builder many years since, and when I had only been a fortnight at the place, was thoroughly acquainted with the principle on which it is constructed."

Here was another glance of contempt from Mrs. Ramsey, who did not however make any reply. But Evans, turning

to her, said, "Bless me, madam, your husband must be a deal older than I took him for, for what a many trades he has been."

They continued on the water some hours, but the sun being intensely hot, they were unsuccessful in their pursuit; they observed, however, as they were landing, a man loaded with a basket, and Evans perceiving it was a fisherman, called out to him; he turned back to the party, and exhibited his fish, which he said he would be glad to dispose of, as he had caught it that morning, and had a long way to carry it. "I told you," said Evans, turning triumphantly to Mr. Ramsey, "that every man knows his own trade best."

CHAPTER VI.

"It is this cloud on their understanding which hinders our voluptuaries from discerning that their blind rage for pleasure turns blessings into their reverse. Birth, education, and abundance, are great blessings, but abused by pleasure into motives and instruments of indulgence.—Birth is more ignoble than obscurity; knowledge is more pernicious than ignorance; and abundance more a misfortune than want."

YOUNG'S LETTERS.

THE party had by this time arrived at the inn, where Jessica was informed that a gentleman, who had refused to leave his name, had desired to speak with her; she was surprised and struck with the singularity of this circumstance, and conjecturing who, amongst the few persons with whom she was acquainted, it could be, when she observed a figure

with which she felt herself familiar, pass the window; she went out of the room, and found herself instantly in the arms of this stranger, whom she now discovered to be her brother. Her mind sunk under the dreadful apprehension of some impending evil, and the first which presented itself was that of Mr. Hanbury's death. "Oh, Charles," said she, "why have you come, where is Mr. Hanbury, and how is he?" "Very well, Jessica, for any thing I know; I did not come here to bring news of him, but to see you. Why, my dear girl, you look as dismal as if you had been coming from his funeral."

Jessica now recovered herself sufficiently to ask of Charles the real purport of this sudden journey. "To tell you the truth," said he, "I am rather in an awkward predicament, and I came to ask a little of your assistance; though, by the bye, you must not blow me to Mr. Hanbury, or I am dished. The fact

is, my girl, I want a little of the ready, and as you are, you know, of age, you have it at your own disposal." "Charles," said Jessica, "I am well convinced that your allowance from Mr. Hanbury is more than adequate to your real wants; the demands of wanton extravagance no fortune, however unlimited, will be found sufficient to supply. The mind that cannot accommodate itself to a narrow income must, in every situation, feel embarrassed, for if your fortune was increased, your imaginary wants would rise in proportion, and would be found to exceed the means which you possessed to gratify them, as much as they now do."

"Well, but Jessica, I did not come here to receive a lecture, but something more substantial. It is not a very large sum of money that I want, and I will promise that you shall have it in three months, at which time I shall be of age. It was an unlucky affair to be sure, but

one thousand will settle all differences; if it was a debt contracted in the common way, one would not mind, but a debt of honour, you know, is an aukward thing."

Jessica now found her sentiments change to horror and astonishment; that he should, at his age, have commenced that most despicable and dreadful of all characters, a gamester; that the son of her revered father should have become a determined profligate. "O my father," she exclaimed, "happy is it for you that the grave has concealed these things from your eyes, for you were indeed taken from the evil to come! Charles, I am grieved, deeply grieved for you; amidst all your follies I have hitherto indulged a hope, a confidence, that your heart was still unvitiated, and that depravity had no share in your errors; your account of this affair has most sorrowfully undeceived me, and I can now no longer dwell on your remembrance with one sensation of pleasure. When I look back

on the days of your infancy, how different was the promise which they gave, and how fallacious have the hopes of my poor father proved! I conjure you, in his name, to reflect, and to contemplate that dreadful abyss in which you are about to sink both your reputation and your property; for to the gamester BOTH are equally insecure. Little as I mingle with society, and confined as my observations must consequently be, yet I am at present acquainted with more than one family whose actual respectability has been sunk, and their views in life utterly destroyed, by the indulgence of a propensity to the fatal vice of gaming, in some one of their members; did its evils, indeed, terminate with the ruin of property, it would be comparatively happy; but perhaps there is no one vice which so completely debases the whole character; it sinks a mind which might, perhaps, under other circumstances, have been led to the exertion of some degree of

energy in the pursuit of virtue, to the most contemptible state of *egotism*; self is the sole spring of all a gamester's actions; his heart is as much steeled against the claims of his wife, his children, or his nearest associates, as against the more distant impulse of universal suffering; he may be said to behold every object through a distorted medium, and to feel no interest in any being, in any pursuit in existence, but such as can facilitate his narrow, his avaricious, schemes; his temper dependant on the next chance of the dice; his mind contaminated by the continual contemplation of another's wealth, of which he is eagerly looking forward to the appropriation; his heart grown callous to the miseries of his fellow-creatures; alike deaf to the calls of justice, and the pleadings of compassion: What from a gamester can be expected, but that, having lived until he has become a disgrace to himself, his family, and a mark for the finger of scorn to

point at, he will fill up the measure of his iniquities by some dreadful deed: To live despised! to die unlamented! What a mournful prospect for a young man just entering into life, and whose future lot must so greatly depend on himself. You have solicited me, Charles, to grant you a thousand pounds---a thousand pounds may appear a small sum to one, who could risk it on the hazard of a die, but it is half of what I possess; and I cannot, indeed I cannot, sacrifice so large a sum to so unworthy a purpose. When I assure you that I will conceal your situation from Mr. Hanbury, let it be understood that it is with a view of sparing his feelings, and not giving additional poignancy to the ills under which he now labours; as for your feelings, Charles, your recent conduct, and the levity with which you have treated this terrible proceeding, sufficiently prove those to be completely depraved, and I have now

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only to mourn over the past, despairing of the future."

Charles seemed touched by his sister's emotion, and assured her that he had been led into error, and had not, as she imagined, voluntarily become a gamester. He now promised her that no consideration should tempt him in future to a conduct of a similar nature, but that his feelings were so humiliating on this occasion, on which his honour was exposed, that he did not know to what lengths he might be driven, in order to retrieve the sum, if she still persisted in her refusal.

"We will suppose for a moment," said Jessica, in reply to Charles's last address, "that your present application had been urged by pecuniary distresses, arising from inevitable misfortune; that you had been engaged in commercial concerns, which had proved unfortunate, as is too often the case; or that some untoward circumstance had deprived you of the means of existence;

I trust it is unnecessary for me to say with what heartfelt satisfaction, in an exigency like *this*, I should have extended to you any part, nay the whole, of my property. But I have too *frequently* had occasion to express those sentiments of severe reprehension, amounting to *disgust*, which I have felt, and still do feel, at the conduct of weak women in similar transactions. And I am sorry to observe, that amongst the many instances which I have seen, and read of, very few, if any, have resigned their property for useful or virtuous purposes; but suffering their feelings to be wrought upon, by idle promises of amendment on the part of the petitioner, have been led into a concurrence, against which their better judgment revolted; and have had cause hereafter, on witnessing the inefficacy of this kind of temporary relief, to regret, deeply regret, their folly. It is indeed, on the part of the individual who concedes to demands of

this nature, a tacit approbation of, and encouragement to, vice; and many are there, I doubt not, who, had their first application been resisted, might have been effectually checked in the beginning of their career. *Every* species of vicious excess it behoves society in general, and my sex in *particular*, to discourage. A woman who yields her property, either to the *rapacious* grasp of the gamester, or to the indulgence of *any other* vicious pursuit, presents not only an extremely reprehensible, but a highly indelicate character; reprehensible, because she thus deprives herself of the means by which she might be enabled to encourage the industrious, relieve the worthy, and raise the unfortunate; and indelicate, because she supports those vices which ought to be discountenanced. I trust I know and feel, too deeply, what I owe to the memory of our excellent father, to administer to the vices of his son. To your misfortunes, Charles, I would freely

resign any portion, nay the whole, of that little which I can bestow; but I will spare myself the miserable reflection, in some future hour, of having sacrificed the least part to your vices." Jessica leaned against the window, and wept. "Mr. Hanbury is ill, Charles," continued she, "very ill, and may soon be taken from you; oh, do not deprive yourself of every friend, but be at least your own." Charles remained silent, and apparently indignant, but he knew, too well, the firmness of his sister's mind, to attempt any further persuasion. "I call upon you," said Jessica, "to desist from this destructive practice, in the name of my father; I know of only one more sacred by which I could appeal; farewell! When I can forget the past, I will see you again, for the present we must part;" and, giving him her hand in trembling emotion, she hurried out of the room.

CHAPTER VII.

Oh, enviable, early days,
When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze,
To care, to guilt unknown;
How ill exchanged for riper times,
To feel the follies or the crimes
Of others, or my own.

BURNS.

AFTER the departure of her brother, whose sudden appearance, together with the purport of his visit, had agitated her so much, Jessica found herself wholly unfitted for the enjoyment of company, and sent down her excuses to Mrs. Ramsey.

When the party were assembled at dinner, "bless me," said Evans, "I wonder where Miss Greville can be, I saw her talking to a very odd-looking young gen-

tleman, as I passed the window, a little time since; and I thought, by her voice, she did not much wish to be heard." "Sir," said Compton, "I hope you did not, by undue methods, descend to the meanness of endeavouring to become acquainted with the subject of their conference?" "No, Sir, by no means, I only just stopped to hear if I could get at the gentleman's name, which I thought there was no great harm in, particularly as I did not know it before."

"And pray," interrupted Mr. Ramsey, "of what consequence could his name be to you?"

"None, only that because he refused to leave it in the morning, it seemed as if he was not desirous that it should be known."

"And that," said Mrs. Ramsey, "was one very good reason why you should attempt to discover it."

"He is most likely some lover of her's, who comes to see her unknown to her

guardian," continued Evans, "and I have just been thinking that is the reason he would not leave his name." And, turning to Compton, he said, "don't you think so, Sir?"

"Sir," said he, very sternly, "I am not in the habit of investigating the affairs of others, and reasoning upon what they do." "And yet, Sir," said Evans, "you seem to know, as well as any body, what was done by the ancients."

Here Jessica entered the room, and, after apologizing for being absent at dinner, said that her brother had called upon her on business, and not finding her within, had refused to leave his name, fearing that his sudden appearance might cause her alarm on Mr. Hanbury's account, and his time being limited, he would not disturb the party.

Compton darted a glance of contempt at Evans, who blushed, and recollected something which he had left in another room.

The following day being fixed for their return, Mrs. Ramsey proposed another ramble, and the party set out. During the walk, Compton found an opportunity of detaching Jessica from the party, and repeated his proposals, which she declined in the handsomest manner. Whilst she expressed her gratitude for the honour he had conferred on her, she assured him that one circumstance could alone encrease her sense of the compliment he had paid her, his ceasing to persevere in attentions which must be equally painful to them both. The party continued out till very late in the evening, and had the mind of Jessica been sufficiently composed—her heart sufficiently at ease, to enter into their beauties, she must have sensibly felt the sublimity of the scenes around her, and shared in the pleasure they were calculated to inspire; but she was occupied in less pleasing contemplations---her thoughts engrossed by other subjects.

She was happy in the idea of meeting Mr. Hanbury again, but with what sensations could she meet him; for the first time since she had known him she was practising deception, and, though her heart acquitted her of any intentional wrong, and her motives for the concealment were regard for his happiness, yet she now felt so far from happiness herself, that she deeply regretted her part in the transaction: but it was too late, the promise had been given, and she must abide by it's consequences.

After a journey, which to her appeared tedious, the party arrived at Oak Hanger the following evening, where she took her leave of them, and prepared for her interview with Mr. Hanbury, whom she learned was expected at home that night.

Whilst she sat ruminating upon the unpleasant event which had befallen her since his departure, she heard the sound of a carriage in the court, and ran ou

to welcome him; in the uncertain gleam, which twilight threw over the surrounding objects, she did not perceive the alteration which a few days had made in his appearance.

After affectionately embracing her, " Jessica," said Mr. Hanbury, " I am far from well, and I rejoice that you are returned, for I much feared that I should have arrived before you, and I am anxious to hasten my departure from hence."

" I fear Sir," answered Jessica, " that you have fatigued yourself in the business on which you went;" her voice faltered, and when she thought of the unworthiness of that object for whose welfare he was thus kindly solicitous, her heart sunk within her.

He bade her ring for candles, and she had now an opportunity of observing his emaciated looks; he saw her emotion, and kindly taking her hand, he said, " do not distress yourself my love,

I am more than satisfied, for I am rendered happy by the journey I have taken, which, though it may have added to my bodily fatigue, has freed me from much mental anxiety; I am not deceived myself, Jessica, I would not deceive you; the time of my sojourn here draws to a close; I trust I have left the affairs of your brother, for the short space that remains of his minority, in proper hands, and oh! may his future life, whilst it gives comfort to you, be employed respectably to himself, and honourably to the memory of his dear father."

Here, overcome by the violence of his emotion, Mr. Hanbury paused; the feelings of Jessica at this moment were too powerful for utterance, but she would secretly have rejoiced, if joy could have had any part in her reflections, that he was ignorant of the recent failure in the conduct of her brother; should he recover, thought she, and I

am freed from my promise, I can then reveal the truth; but why should I add to the weight of his sufferings, and embitter his last days, by a disclosure that can only prove unavailing to myself, and miserable to him?

They soon after separated for the night, and Jessica left alone to her reflections, had leisure to survey the past, and mournfully to anticipate the future. Her life hitherto had been one series of disquietude, and there was no prospect, however remote, which offered rest. Mr. Hanbury she had relied upon, as her resource in every difficulty, and felt for him the affection of a daughter; but his health was visibly declining, and she dreaded to think the time might soon arrive, when she should mourn the departure of her last and only surviving friend.

When they met in the morning, he remarked the dejection of her looks; "but," added he, "I hope the change

of scene will divert your mind, and strengthen your spirits."

He asked her how she had passed her time, during her excursion to the Lakes; she gave him an account of the party, and expressed her wonder at the choice of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey, in the society of Evans. "It is not," said Mr. Hanbury, "simply from choice, but greatly, I believe, through interested motives, that they bear with the company of that weak and vulgar young man.

Mr. Ramsey is in the law, and Evans is continually involved in law suits; his father was a merchant in this neighbourhood, very rich, but extremely weak in intellect; the former, he has made his son, by bequeathing to him the whole of his property; in the latter he resembled him by nature. But, my dear, we can seldom in this life judge of the real motives which induce connexions of this kind, or how often interest forms the only bond of union between man-

kind. But were you not delighted with the fine prospects you would see, and astonished with the grandeur of the scenery around the Lakes?" "I was indeed, Sir," replied Jessica, "and wished much for you;" he shook his head, and sighing deeply, added, "there was a time when I could keenly feel, and enthusiastically admire the beauties of nature; the world was then opening to my view, and I had only surveyed the pleasing side of the prospect; but these moments with me, Jessica, have passed away, and it is only for you, who are in the dawning of youth, and the vigor of hope, to enjoy scenes like those. Contemplate them then, before the cold blasts of disappointment, or the lassitude of age, shall have robbed them of their charms."

He then requested she would prepare for their voyage, which he wished to take place the following week, in order to avoid the Equinox.

He wrote to Charles, giving him some general advice as to his future conduct, mentioning to him that he had left his affairs in the hands of a person on whom he could rely, and conjuring him to be a friend and protector to his sister.

Having performed that duty, he went out, accompanied by Jessica, to take leave of his parishioners; it was a painful task, and the sorrow which they expressed, sensibly shocked his young friend, as it evidently betrayed a fear that they should see him no more. He bore it however extremely well, and shewed no signs of discomposure. "I don't know how it is," said he to Jessica, as they sat after dinner, "but I feel in taking this voyage, as if I was returning to my home, after a long absence;" "You have, then, been in France before," said Jessica. "Only in passing through it," he replied. "I understood from my father," returned she, "that you

had been a resident abroad." "Yes, added he, "my love, your father was right, but it was in Italy, not in France, where I passed my time;" he turned to the window, and she saw the tears start from his eyes; "beloved country," sighed he, "I shall visit you no more."

He sat for some moments lost in thought, and then conversed on other subjects; Jessica talked to him of the pleasure she should experience from the voyage, and they finally fixed their departure for the following week.

CHAPTER VIII.

" Among these men, there is of the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, by the help of wine and riot, and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep which disturbs their gaiety, and calls upon them to retreat from ruin."

JOHNSON.

AFTER Charles had parted from his sister, he began to feel some remorse at his late conduct, but he was involved in difficulties which she knew not of, and from which she could not have extricated him. His rooms in College were now become a rendezvous for gamesters, and at those meetings in which they daily indulged, large sums of money had been sacrificed; and it was in one of these,

when thrown off his guard by previous intoxication, Charles had been swindled out of the money for which he had applied to Jessica; his friend, if their can be any friendship amongst men of this discription, had frequently supplied him with small sums, which he had hitherto regularly paid; but conscious of the disgrace which must await them when these meetings were discovered, Davenport had quitted College, and entered into a regiment that was quartered in the neigbourhood. In the situation of Charles Greville and Davenport, there was a very essential difference, the latter being possesed of large property, and having considerable estates in reversion, whilst the fortune of the former, without any expectancies, did not exceed twelve thousand pounds. One valuable estate of Mr. Greville's, on his death had devolved to a distant branch of his family, and the fortune which he had been enabled to leave to his children,

had chiefly arisen from his own œconomy. Thus had Charles been drawn into extravagancies, by associating with those who, only his equals in rank, were superior to him in fortune; and would when the evil day arrived, no doubt, leave him to lament alone the effects of his folly. What, those were his interview with the tutor on his return from Cumberland proved; who sent for him, and, as the friend of Mr. Hanbury, advised him to leave the College, as the late proceedings of the party were discovered, and it would save him from the odium which might, perhaps, hereafter attach to him on being expelled. Charles now began seriously to reflect on the enormity of his conduct, and had a reformation followed his reflections, it would have been well. He quitted the College, and wrote to inform Davenport of his situation, who promised, if he would go to him, to procure a commission for him in the regiment of which

his uncle had the command. Charles accepted the offer, and having formed new connections, new views, threw off all remembrance of the past, and entered once more on his career of folly. His sister, like his promises of amendment, was totally forgotten, and when he thought of Mr. Hanbury, it was only to congratulate himself that he was no longer subject to his power.

CHAPTER IX.

The purple morn that paints with sidelong gleam,
The cliffs tall crest, the waving woods that ring,
With charm of birds rejoicing in the beam,
Touch soft the wakeful nerves according string.

Then at sad meditation's silent hour,
A thousand wishes steal upon the heart,
And, whilst they meekly bend to heaven's high pow'r,
Ah! think tis hard, 'tis surely hard to part.

To part from every hope that brought delight,
From those that lov'd them, those they lov'd so much,
Then fancy swells the picture on the sight,
And softens every scene at every touch.

BOWLES.

Mr. Hanbury and Jessica in the mean time had set out on their voyage, and the hope of his ever returning grew daily more feeble. They travelled by easy stages till they reached Southamp-

ton, whence they were to embark for Montpelier. And had not the declining health of her friend preyed on her spirits, and unfitted her for the reception of such impressions, the heart of Jessica, susceptible as it was of every refined emotion, would have sensibly felt the scenes around; but she saw no object with interest, save the emaciated form of him whom she loved, and whom she perceived she must soon lose sight of for ever.

These were the moments in which she was called upon to exercise that fortitude which she had early acquired; it was not the strength of mind which, by *modern* philosophers, is called *energy*; her's was a reliance on that Being who orders all things.

She earnestly solicited Mr. Hanbury to consult a physician before they embarked, and he sent for one who had been previously recommended; Jessica found him a sensible and unassuming

man, and was much consoled by his visit.

She entreated him to be candid with her, and tell her the extent of what she had to fear. He assured her that Mr. Hanbury's complaint did not exhibit any symptoms of immediate danger: "A winter in the south of France," said he, "will at least prevent his disorder from gaining ground, and the mild gales of spring may do much towards his restoration."

He offered his assistance in procuring accomodations for their passage, in a proper vessel; an attention for which Jessica felt very grateful. In the evening he returned, and informed her that he had procured a passage for herself, Mr. Hanbury, and a servant, in a vessel now lying in the harbour, ready to sail with the first fair wind; and that the captain's mate would come down the following morning, and prepare her for their departure. After shaking

hands with Mr. Hanbury and herself, with all the cordiality of an old friend, he took his leave of them. The next morning, according to his promise, they were waited on by a young man from the ship, who informed them, that as the wind now blew fair, they should sail in the course of two hours.

Jessica prevailed on Mr. Hanbury to lie down and endeavour to get some rest, whilst, assisted by his servant, she prepared their luggage; after which they went down to the vessel, and found on board two passengers, who were going, like themselves, to a foreign clime, in search of that health which had been denied them in their own.

A young man, apparently in the last stage of a consumption, was attended by a very interesting and lovely woman, whom Jessica now found was his wife.

The traces of melancholy were strongly impressed on her countenance, and

when Jessica, after the first salutation was over, had seated herself on deck she thought of those words of the monk in Sterne's journey, " No doubt there is misery enough in every corner of the world, as well as within our convent."

" Won't you go into the cabin my love," said the stranger to her husband? " no," said he, " Matilda, the air refreshes me, and I am better here;" she looked sorrowfully at Jessica, and, taking his hand, seated herself in silence beside him.

Mr. Hanbury, sick and languid, had retired to his cabin, whither Jessica now followed him.

She remarked the interesting appearance of these young people, and lamented that, in all human probability, they would be soon separated.

" It is a heavy calamity to have our friends torn from us by the hand of death," said she. " It is indeed, Jessica,"

replied Mr. Hanbury, " but it is luxury, in comparison of what we feel when they are estranged from us by their or our unworthiness. Perhaps in the catalogue of human ills, there is no calamity more difficult to endure, than the discovery of ingratitude in that being on whom we have placed our affection, and with whom we have entrusted our hope of happiness."

" It is a misfortune," said Jessica, " that I have hitherto escaped ;" " and may you never," added he, " from your own experience, have cause to mourn its effects. But, my love, you should offer your servises to this young stranger, who has no female with her, and you will be a mutual comfort to each other during the voyage." Jessica felt some self reproach that she had not done it before, and now went on deck for that purpose.

" You are very kind," said the stranger, " and I shall not hesitate to

avail myself of the claim which your goodness has given me, should circumstances require it; at present my husband is in his cabin, endeavouring to obtain some rest; and society in my situation is indeed a comfort."

Jessica now found that they were bound for the same port with herself and Mr. Hanbury : " But you are not, I think," said she, " if I may judge from your accent, a native of France?" " No," replied the lady, " I am an English woman, if being born in that country can give me any pretensions to the title, though I have lately been a citizen of the world, and have not long ago returned from Ireland, where we last resided. My husband, as you may have perceived, is very ill, and our object in this voyage is the restoration of his health." " And I hope," added Jessica, " that you will be amply repaid, by witnessing his complete recovery." She shook her head, and sighing replied,

" I am not very sanguine in my hopes on that subject, but that may perhaps arise from having so frequently experienced the fallacy of my wishes."

" Or rather," said Jessica, " your present melancholy may proceed from having parted with friends who are dear to you; under those circumstances, we view our future prospects through a gloomy medium:" " Oh, no," she returned, " that is not indeed the case;" and had Jessica judged by the expression which her countenance in that sentence conveyed, she would have imagined that she had been deserted by every friend. It was now time to retire, as the shades of night drew on. It was an evening in which nature seemed serenely to repose, the moon first rising appeared faintly, throwing it's pale beams over the surface of the water: and as Jessica leaned over the side of the vessel, pensively surveying the surrounding scene, uninterrupted, save by the melan-

choly note of a sailor, who, as he paced the deck, was singing a lament to his absent mistress, her thoughts reverted to the vicissitudes of life. "It is indeed," said she, "a varying picture, and I fear that the dark lines of misery compose it's prominent feature."

"This stranger, with whom I have been conversing, seems far from happy, and yet, young as she is, I should hope that she cannot already have known misfortune."

The feelings of Jessica, had been powerfully awakened, and she was anxious to become acquainted with her story. She now went down to Mr. Hanbury, whom she informed of the result of her visit. He seemed happy that she had met with such an acquisition in the young stranger, and expressed a wish that she would in the morning introduce him; they now parted for the night.

The following morning, when they went on deck, they found the stranger already there, and, after the usual saluta-

tion had passed, Mr. Hanbury enquired after her husband; she said he had passed a disturbed night, but she hoped he had now fallen asleep. "You must support your spirits, my dear Madam," said he, "and not by fruitless sorrow, which must prey on your health, weaken your capacity to give assistance to the object of your care." She thanked him for his attentions, and said she had felt particularly grateful to Miss Greville for her visit the preceding night. Mr Hanbury now left them, and whilst he was engaged with the captain, Jessica renewed her conversation with the stranger. "Your father," said she, turning to Jessica, "seems in a very indifferent state of health:" "Mr. Hanbury," said Jessica, "is indeed far from well; but he is not my father, nor am I so happy as to possess a friend to whom I can attach that endearing title;" when she said this she observed the emotion of the stranger, who

exclaimed, "God knows whether I have a father in existence, but why," clasping her hands together, "should I wish him to exist, perhaps in misery!"

"I fear," said Jessica, "that the sickness of your husband then, is not your only cause of sorrow." "No," said she, "under that misfortune I trust I could acquire resignation; but my griefs are of a nature as complicated, I hope as uncommon, and whether I have any excuse for sinking under their pressure, my sad story will sufficiently evince."

CHAPTER X.

She ceas'd, and weeping turn'd away her head,
She wept as if she had no more to say
Of that perpetual weight, which on her spirit lay.
WORDSWORTH.

"MY father was an officer in the English service, and married when he was very young.

"The friends of my mother were rich and powerful, but after her union with him, their friendship seemed gradually to decline, though her happiness suffered no diminution. She was fondly beloved by him; and she merited his affection; for "she was all that the heart wishes, or the eye looks for in woman." Within a few years of their marriage, his regiment was ordered to America, whither my mother accompanied him.

"My self and one brother were then the only fruit of their union, but during our residence abroad, they had an addition to their family of two daughters. After some years absence, we returned to England; and until the period in which I attained my eighteenth year, perhaps no family ever exhibited a more perfect picture of domestic happiness than was to be found within our little circle.

"My brother was now advancing to manhood; he was the object of our tenderest regard, the idol of his family, and promised to repay, by the propriety and activity of his conduct, the anxiety which my father had felt for him in his earlier years. My father having been advanced to the rank of Major, purchased a house in the neighbourhood of London, and my sisters were now sent to a school at some distance.

"Soon after this period, my brother expressed a desire to enter into the navy,

and was placed under the care of a friend of my father's. When I look back upon those days of happiness, and view, in sad succession, " the miseries that one by one I have endured," my heart sinks at the retrospect. My father came in one morning after his walk, and informed us that he had invited some friends to dinner on that day; that he was going to town, but expected to return before five o'clock, at which hour he had fixed to meet his company.

" The hour arrived, the party was assembled, and we waited in momentary expectation of my father's return. At six o'clock, my mother became very uneasy; he was in general extremely punctual to his appointments, and she wondered what circumstance could possibly have detained him. His friends endeavoured to calm her fears, by assuring her that he had been prevented returning from some cause, which he had not on his leaving her foreseen; but, in

despite of their endeavours to calm our minds, it was evident that they partook of the apprehensions under which we were suffering. At length they offered their assistance to go in search of him; it was late in the evening, and they dispersed themselves different ways.

"In two hours after their departure, one of the officers arrived, and informed us that he had been unsuccessful in his pursuit; that he had made enquiries at the houses of all my father's friends, and at every place whither he had been accustomed to go; that he had traced him to the house of a banker, where he was told that he had called in the morning; but that every effort to gain intelligence of him after that period had proved unavailing.

"My mother was now in a state of mind which admitted neither of reason or consolation; she insisted upon setting out for town, and, late as it was, we accompanied her in her unhappy search.

We were then advised to insert a paragraph in all the papers, mentioning the circumstance, and offering a large reward; but never, from that hour to this, have any tidings reached us of my poor father." Here, she paused, and wept violently; "but now," continued she, "I must proceed to the events which followed, for the measure of our woe was not yet filled up.

"My sisters were sent for from the school where they had been placed; my brother was abroad with his ship, and my mother now appeared almost broken hearted. None but those who have experienced the agonies of suspence, and suspence too of the most dreadful kind, can form an adequate idea of her sufferings.

"The most consoling thought which could present itself in moments like these, was that of my father's death: that event, on which so many mourn, would have been to her a cause of rejoicing; but she was doomed to drag

on a comfortless existence, without one ray of hope. From my father's commission, under these sad circumstances, we could derive no pecuniary benefit, and our situation was now comparative poverty. We parted with our house, and took a retired lodging in a neighbouring village, where my mother's bodily health seemed hourly to decline.

"To those who murmur at the common evils of life, and sink under their trifling disappointments, the conduct of my mother, under her severe trials, affords an example worthy of imitation; but her's was a rare character, and I should fail in an attempt to do justice to her virtues.

"My brother had now returned to England, where the sad story of our sorrows awaited him: he hastened to us, and if any thing could have imparted pleasure to my mother, his affectionate attentions would have done so; but, in her lacera-

ted heart, the springs of joy were dried up for ever.

"Oh God! how shall I tell the sequel of her sufferings! He left us to join his ship, which was stationed at the Nore: the mutiny broke out, and, in his attempts to quell it, he was one of those who fell a victim." She stopped, and her agitation was so violent, that Jessica requested she would defer her recital to some other period. "No," added she, "I am coming to that crisis, in which I seemed to have arrived at the acme of human misery. The sad news reached us, and from that period my mother's senses were deranged; but it was surely in mercy to her sufferings, that the power of feeling was thus denied.

"She survived not many weeks, and it would have been selfish to have sorrowed at her death: I loved her in a degree which I believe few have felt, and, in losing her, I seemed to have lost all that could render life desirable.

"The world appeared, to my saddened view, one vast desart, where there was no human being who regarded my sorrows, or interested themselves in my fate; and I have frequently prayed, in moments like these, that the grave might receive me. But I had duties to perform, which, after the first shock had subsided, I felt called upon to attend to. My sisters I regarded as a sacred relick now consigned to my protection.

"I wrote to a relation of my mother's, intimating to her the situation in which they were left; and she offered to receive them. She was not exactly the the person with whom, under other circustances, I should have placed them; but I had now no alternative; our property was nearly exhausted; they had no means of earning their support, and my exertions were too feeble to assist us all.

"I obtained for myself, after I had resigned them to my aunt's protection, a

situation as governess in a family, whose kindness was a consolation to me under my misfortunes. I remained with my friends some years: it was under their roof, that I first met with Mr. Bamford, and soon after we were married.

"The accounts which I had received from my sisters had been very satisfactory; but they lately had ceased to write; and becoming uneasy at their silence, I wrote to my aunt, informing her of my union, and my wish of receiving one of my sisters.

"A letter soon after this period arrived; it was from the elder of my sisters, saying, that she had placed herself and Mary in a situation, in which she trusted they would be enabled to earn a subsistence. "My aunt," said she, "must very justly have conceived, that we were now of an age to exert ourselves; and I determined to make the attempt, which has hitherto succeeded.

"I rejoice, my dear sister, to hear of

your welfare, and though I feel very grateful to you for your kind offers of protection, I could not, consistently with my present sentiments, accept of them, or bear to become a burthen on yourself and your husband. I have been early led to consider independence, when honourably procured, one great blessing of life, and if the circumstances which led me to seek it had been less sorrowful than they were, I should have almost rejoiced in the necessity."

"Mr. Bamford was much pleased with the tenor of this letter, and proposed that we should go over to Dublin to see them; and as his health, from the period of our first acquaintance, had been far from strong, I trusted to change of air for his recovery. But after passing some weeks in Dublin, where we daily saw my sisters, who were comfortably and respectably settled as milliners, we were advised by the faculty to make trial of a southern climate; and my

hopes, feeble as they are," added she, bursting into tears, "now rest solely on this voyage." Jessica was much affected on beholding her emotion. "You have indeed," said she, "experienced severe misfortunes, and yet even in your sad story you have cause of thankfulness. The amiable conduct of your sisters must be a lively source of satisfaction, and the society and attentions of your husband a real comfort."

Here Mr. Bamford and Mr. Hanbury joined them, and the conversation took a more general turn. Jessica found Mr. Bamford sensible, polite and unassuming; he gave her an animated description of the country around Montpellier, where he had before for a short time resided.

They soon after separated.

CHAPTER XI.

For other secret grief had he;
Oh! pillow only known to thee.
MONTGOMERY.

"I have been listening to a very interesting, though calamitous tale," said Jessica, when seated in the cabin with Mr. Hanbury, "we knew not, Sir, when we remarked the melancholy appearance of the young stranger, how much cause of sorrow she had experienced."

"I am sorry," replied he, "that so young, she should already have reason to lament the misfortunes of life; for it is only, I believe, from the experience of age that we are taught to form a just estimate of that country, through

which we are destined to travel; in general we set out with imperfect notions, and false ideas of the persons with whom we are to associate, and when frequent disappointment has led to disgust, we sit down to snarl at our fellow creatures; forgetting that the cause of our discontent has originated with ourselves; though, I believe that there is much good in the world, and that there are good people; yet that it has been my fate to frequently mix with the bad, is at once my misfortune and my regret."

"But," interrupted Jessica, "her sufferings, Sir, do not seem to have arisen from the vices, or weaknesses of those around her; but rather from calamities more severe than those which occur in the ordinary lot of humanity." She then told Mr. Hanbury the story she had just heard.

"It is indeed," said he, "a tale of sorrow, and her situation peculiarly

demands, not only the consolations, but the active services of friendship."

Jessica was much cheered by the amendment of Mr. Hanbury's health, for she fancied him already improved by the voyage. They frequently passed whole hours on the deck with their new friends; and Mr. Hanbury sometimes smiled at Jessica, when she talked with all that enthusiasm so natural to youth, of their amiable qualities, and the enjoyment she should derive from their society, when they arrived at Montpelier.

Thus in her virtuous exertions to amuse them, and her filial attentions to Mr. Hanbury, passed another week of their voyage.

As she contemplated with rapture the objects towards which they were gradually approaching, a new source of gratification arose to Jessica; it was now the latter end of autumn, and as they advanced nearer the shore, she observed, with the admiration of a painter, the

many coloured tints of the surrounding scenery.

The time of the vintage was already passed, and the woods which she saw at a distance seemed to be losing their foliage; but the thought of being so near the termination of her voyage, which circumstance would afford rest to Mr. Hanbury, repaid her for every previous anxiety. "When we return to England," said she, "he will, I trust, be restored to the perfect enjoyment of health; and with what gratitude shall I, for the remainder of my life, dwell on the remembrance of this voyage."

In a very few days after they arrived at Montpelier, and took a small house in it's environs, for the winter months. Jessica wandered through the delightful scenes, which she had so often anticipated, with her friend Matilda, whenever the latter could be prevailed on to leave her husband; and, but for the anxiety which she sometimes felt on her brother's

account, Jessica had now no wish ungratified.

From him she had been separated nearly two months, and though she had written to him of Mr. Hanbury's intention of leaving England, and named the place of their destination, not a line in reply had yet reached her. Mr. Hanbury had once expressed his surprise at this circumstance; and his having lately ceased to mention the subject, led her to imagine that it arose from a fear of adding to her anxiety.

She wrote to Charles, by a packet that was sailing for England, and expressed her uneasiness at his long silence. But week after week elapsed, and her letter remained unnoticed.

Mr. Hanbury's health, now appeared to be daily recovering, and she flattered herself that they would soon be enabled to return to England; but she remarked his dejection of mind, which appeared to encrease with his returning health:

a circumstance which called forth her regret, and awakened her surprise. He often wandered alone for hours, and in these walks never expressed a wish that she should accompany him; though his attachment to her had evidently become stronger since their arrival in France.

She had been visited by a few families at the place, but Mr. Hanbury's present situation, and his appearent dislike to mix in society, had prevented her cultivating that which had been offered.

"Why, my dear Jessica," said he one day to her, "do you refuse to enter into company? the manners of the people here, would afford you amusement from their novelty; and it is at all times an advantage for young people to mingle with the world."

"I declined it," replied she, "because I perceived that you, Sir, derive no pleasure from it."

"It is true," interrupted he, "that society has for me lost great part of it's

attraction; but we are very differently situated. Youth is the season for active enjoyment: age is only fitted for calm repose; and after the storms which I have encountered, I may be allowed, my young friend, to rest my shattered bark in that harbour, where quiet is most easily attained.

"I promised, previous to our quitting England, that I would some time relate to you the history of my past life, the present time seems favourable to my purpose. You have yet formed no material connection in life, no attachment on which your happiness is dependent; learn then, Jessica, from my sad narrative, to be cautious how you commit your peace, and rest your hopes of comfort on the fallibility of man."

CHAPTER XII.

Hermia, for aught that I could ever hear, or read
in tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth,
For either it was different in blood,
Or else misgrafted in respect of years,
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,
Or if there was a sympathy in both,
Death, war, or sickness, did lay siege to it.

SHAKESPEARE.

" I am by birth an Englishman, and descended from an ancient family; my father, to all the pride of rank united strong national prejudices.

" He was austere, and unbending in his manners, though his notions of honour were of the most exalted nature, and he possesed many of the virtues hat dignify humanity: in his religious

tenets strongly bigoted, he seemed impressed with an idea that every thing good and great were concentrated in a protestant and an Englishman. From these prejudices I owe, in a considerable degree, the subsequent miseries that have befallen me.

" My mother was one of the most exalted characters I ever met with; to all the charms of feeling she added the clearest powers of reasoning, and to manners the most soft an elegant, a strictness of principle the most rigid: " open as day to melting charity," her benevolence diffused itself through the mansions of penury. None were too obscure to escape her observation, and her eye, ever intent on human misery, penetrated into every recess where pain or sorrow dwelt.

"If any thing could have subdued the prejudices of my father, or softened the austerity of his manners, the society of this incomparable woman would have

effected the change. But that the opinions he held were those in which he had been educated, and were too deeply implanted for any human power to eradicate them. In the education of his family, which consisted of myself and a younger brother, he was particularly scrupulous in selecting, as tutors, those who, capable of instructing us in every branch of science, would yield implicitly to his opinions in those points with which our interests were more particularly connected.

" But for the antidote which my mother's conversation offered, I should have become prejudiced, bigotted, and illiberal; however unamiable are these traits of character, it might have proved happier for me had they influenced my conduct.

" Before I had reached my eighteenth year, this excellent woman was torn from us; her decline was gradual, and her state of mind, under its effects, was truly

to be envied; she looked back on the retrospect of a well spent life, and saw the future beaming with the brightest hopes of felicity.

"After her death, which was the heaviest calamity I had then experienced, my brother was sent from home to complete his studies, and I remained with my father.

"Grief has various effects upon the different minds of those who suffer from its power, and that which would have softened the disposition of some, and rendered them more susceptible of feeling, appeared to have made my father's colder and more insensible.

"I had been early accustomed to the society of my mother, whose life had so strongly evinced the value of those liberal doctrines she professed; and I could not now even affect (in conformity to the opinions of any one) to embrace others from which my principles revolted.

"My father and I had various ar-

guments, and they usually terminated in anger: my brother soon after this period returned, and I solicited my father, as he had now a companion, to allow of my taking the tour of Europe.

" To this plan he would not most probably have consented, but in the hope that I should return dissatisfied with every nation but my own. Alas! how contrary to his expectations were the feelings with which I viewed, after an absence of nearly three years, that country which gave me birth.

" I had letters of recommendation to several families on the continent, and to some persons of the first rank ; and I set out with those sanguine hopes of amusement, which the mind in youth is apt to indulge.

" Accustomed to lead a life of comparative seclusion, my notions of mankind had been founded on theory : the time had now arrived when, in an un-

restrained intercourse with the world, I was to judge of it by a fairer test.

" Fortunate would it have proved for me, if experience had not robbed me of the delusion which I had hitherto cherished.

" The companion of my travels was a friend of my father's, who acted in the capacity of tutor to myself and my brother.

" We had travelled through France, and visited every part of that kingdom to which strangers usually direct their attention; but I was anxious to return by way of Italy, in order to visit a French family, friends of ours, then resident in Naples. On my arrival in that city, I found them at a villa in the suburbs of that place, to which they usually retired in the summer months, but they soon after returned to Naples, whither, as I had now become a resident in their house, I accompanied them.

" The season was far advanced, and

they had commenced their amusements for the winter. One evening the Marchioness proposed that I should accompany her to an assembly at the house of one of her particular friends. My imperfect knowledge of the language of that country made me anxious to avoid the society of strangers, but I sometimes found it impossible to refuse the invitations which were offered me.

" On our entrance into the room, which was crowded with company, and brilliantly lighted, I was presented to the lady of the house, and that attention which the English so generally meet with abroad was paid to me. Amongst the group of females who were assembled, my attention was instantly attracted by one who seemed to command universal admiration by the elegance of her appearance: perhaps you are not acquainted with that dignified stile of Italian beauty, which she possessed in so eminent a degree: her large dark eyes, beaming

sensibility and sweetness, and shaded by long silken lashes, her pensive countenance, joined to a form elegant and commanding, seemed all combined to render her fascinating.

" In the course of the evening I was introduced to Celestina, and I found that her mind did not disgrace its beautiful temple.

" On our return I made various enquiries respecting her, and the Marchioness informed me that she was the daughter of a man of some consequence in Naples, " but their fortunes," continued she, " are declining, and she will, I suppose, become a victim at the altar of family aggrandizement."

" It is common in this country for families to sacrifice some of their members, for the sake of encreasing the fortunes of the rest. This is frequently done, by uniting them where wealth is the grand object, and affection has no share, and to this circumstance, the jealousy of the Italians may, perhaps,

in part be owing; for if they reject this alternative, they must retire to a convent for the remainder of their days, and there, perhaps, drag on a tedious and cheerless existence."

"And is this beautiful young woman," I replied, "to experience such a fate? can her family be sufficiently cruel to immolate the happiness of so lovely a creature, on principles so mercenary?"

"I know," said the Marchioness, "that she has been been addressed by a man who is every way hateful to her, she is too virtuous to marry without affection, and will in all probability take the veil.

"But you seem particularly interested," added she, "in her concerns, and she is one of my intimate friends. To-morrow, if you please, we will call upon her, and you will have a better opportunity of forming your opinion, than the short interview of this evening afforded you.

"The following day the Marchioness took me to the house of Celestina's

father, and if I had before only felt the sentiments of pity for her situation, and admiration of her beauty, those were certainly now heightened into esteem.

" My friend is anxious to cultivate your acquaintance," said the Marchioness, as she presented me to her, " and I have promised that you will instruct him in Italian:" " It is a task," said she blushing, " that you might well have spared me, for I feel very unequal to the undertaking, and I fear if the signor relies on my powers, he will leave Italy impressed only with an idea of the poverty of it's language."

" I assured her that she would make me happy by allowing me to try the experiment, and if," added I, " I can meet with happiness on the road to knowledge, it is at least worth while to make the attempt."

" From that day I was constantly in Celestina's society ;- she frequently visited the Marchioness, and I accompanied

her in all her walks ; I frequently observed, and with severe anxiety, the dejection under which she appeared to labour ; but as she never adverted to the cause, I could only feel in silence.

" Her brothers were at this period abroad, and with her father, proud, suspicious, and apparently unfeeling, I disliked too much to associate, except when unavoidable circumstances drew us together.

" Her mother had died some years before, and to the sorrow she had felt on that event, I sometimes attributed, in part, the melancholy which tinctured her mind,

" At this period Mr. Mortimer had letters from England, mentioning the declining state of my father's health.

" From the time that I quitted that country, my brother had only once written to me, or in any manner noticed the receipt of my letters : I was much

hurt at this appearance of ingratitude, and neglect.

" I now wrote to him, and couched my letter not in the terms of reproach that his conduct certainly merited, but with the affection of a brother.

" I mentioned Celestina, and discanted warmly on her virtues, but I unfortunately adverted to her religious persuasions; thus in an unguarded moment, and in the warmth of feeling, I prepared for myself whole years of misery.

" Some time elapsed, and no reply to my letter had yet reached me: my anxiety augmented, and my fears for my father's health encreased to a degree of torture. I at length formed the resolution of going over to England, but the reluctance with which I yielded to the idea revealed the secret of my heart, and discovered those sentiments which I had endeavoured to conceal even from myself: and I now, for the

first time, became sensible of the extent of my passion for Celestina.

" But there were obstacles too insurmountable to be passed. She was a foreigner and a Catholic, and I must resolve either to renounce my father, or my affection; for had she united every thing else which could have gratified ambition, or rendered the idea of our union delightful, those were circumstances that must for ever prove a barrier to my wishes; the sentiments that I entertained for her I determined should never stray beyond my own bosom, and I resolved, by tearing myself from her society, to endeavour to forget her.

CHAPTER XIII.

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming;
I love not less, though less the shew appear:
That love is merchandiz'd whose rich esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.

SHAKESPEARE.

"ON the following day, when I met the Marchioness at breakfast, I mentioned to her my intention of returning to England, in consequence of my father's declining health. She approved my resolution, and applauded so very warmly the motive for my return, that I now suspected she had penetrated my sentiments with regard to her friend.

"After forming this resolution I found it necessary to put it in practice as soon as I could quit Naples; but I could not

bear the idea of doing that without bidding farewel to Celestina.

" It was now the return of summer, and she was in the country: I rode over in the evening of that day, and was informed by the servant, on enquiring for her, that she was at home, but much indisposed.

" I sent in my name, and was shewn into the apartment where she usually sat; in a few minutes she entered the room, when I was shocked at beholding the alteration in her looks.

" She had lost much of that bloom which I had so frequently admired, and the lustre of her fine eyes was totally gone; she approached me with a melancholy smile, and holding out her hand, " I thought," said she, " Signor, that you had deserted your friend, but I am learning the hard task of enduring neglect without repining, since it has been my sad fate through life to experience it

most from those whose friendship I particularly valued."

"I endeavoured to account for my absence, but I found how much I failed in the attempt; her altered appearance had greatly depressed me, and the purport of my visit wrung my heart to agony: my fortitude was completely shaken; I made an effort to speak, but my voice became tremulous, and I was obliged to pause.

"I should have availed myself," at length I replied, "of the permission which you so kindly gave me, of visiting you in your retirement; but my mind has lately been much agitated in consequence of the intelligence which has reached me of my father's declining health.

"Our enjoyments in this life are fleeting and uncertain; and amongst the highest and most refined which I have ever known, I rank your society; and the moment in which I must tear myself from it is, perhaps, that in which I have

most fully estimated its value. But imperious necessity commands me to return to my own country, and I must submit.

" I now felt the little resolution which I had acquired at the beginning of this sentence had totally failed me. I stopt in excessive agitation: I ventured for the first time to raise my eyes from the ground: I darted one glance at Celestina, and the expression of her countenance revealed to me that I was beloved.

" She attempted to speak, she uttered something of her wishes for my happiness, her remembrance of my friendship. It was too much; my own feelings I could have endured, but to leave her under a conviction of her affection for me; to leave her unhappy, and perhaps for ever, whilst my own heart was writhing with agony, oh no, it was impossible! All the prejudices of my father were in that moment forgotten.

I threw myself at her feet, and declared to her the extent of my attachment.

" Suffer me then," said I, " in quitting you, to indulge the fond hope, that you will sometimes think of your absent friend; that you will preserve for me inviolate that esteem of which I proudly acknowledge myself possessed. I return to my own country to reveal to my father the extent of my passion, and when fortune shall permit me to revisit you, allow me to console myself with the hope that you will be mine."

" No, Signor," she replied; " my regard for you is of a nature too disinterested to involve you in misery. You have spoken frequently of the unalterable opinions of your father; and Mr. Mortimer has freely descanted on his national and religious prejudices.

" My country and my faith alike exclude me from his favour; but if the assurance of my firm regard, my unchanging esteem, can add to your happiness, you

will return to England impressed with a conviction that no circumstances can alter my heart or banish you from my remembrance. I entreated that she would allow me a hope, however distant, that should I succeed in subduing the prejudices of my father, she would consent to our union.

" I spoke of my future prospects, and painted our felicity in the glowing colours of hope. I requested that she would allow me to see her again prior to my quitting Naples, and in this she acquiesced.

" When I arrived at the Marquis's I enquired for the family. I was informed that the Marchioness and Mr. Mortimer were gone out, but that the Marquis was alone in his study. Regardless of form, I entered it without announcing my name, and found him writing.

" I informed him where I had passed the evening, and gave him a particular account of my interview with Celestina.

" You have a powerful rival," said he " in the Conte, who, for some considerable time, has paid his addresses to her, and to whom the obligations of her father are very great. You may, however, rely on my friendship, and rest assured that I will exert my interest in your cause."

" Soon after the Marchioness and Mr. Mortimer entered, and I expressed my wonder at the silence of my brother, respecting my father's health.

" Perhaps," said Mr. Mortimer, "you are sparing in your communications to him, or he may suppose that you are absorbed by other and nearer interests at present."

" Do you think then," said I, " that the health of a parent is so trifling a consideration as to excite no solicitude in the mind of an absent son? " When that son" said he, " ceases to regard the opinions of his father, it is a natural conclusion his affection has declined

also I felt too much contempt to reply: we soon after separated.

"When left alone this unpleasant subject again recurred to my thoughts; I knew that my brother had frequently written to Mr. Mortimer, for it was only through the medium of their communications that I had become acquainted with any event subsequent to my departure.

"I was now convinced that he suspected my attachment to Celestina, and the manner in which he had treated the subject prevented my addressing him openly upon it.

"I was more than ever anxious to return to England; and when I met with the Marquis the following morning I spoke to him of my intention, and consulted with him as to the most proper manner of avowing to the Signor my affection for his daughter.

"I do not approve of any present disclosure," said the Marquis; "for should he

consent to or even approve your union, which I much doubt, though your fortune will in all probability exceed that of the Conte, yet I suspect he is bound to him by a previous treaty, and if the objections of your father prove insurmountable, I know too much of the character of the Signor to hope that he would consent to your union; and in that case the misery of Celestina would in all probability be accelelerated by an immediate marriage with the Conte.

"If you will leave this part of the affair to me, I will endeavour, in your absence, to influence the mind of the Signor in your favour.

"Your intention of returning to England I approve, and be assured I will not fail one moment to inform you of any thing which may in any way affect you interest or happiness." I expressed my gratitude for this warmth of friendship in my behalf; and, after promising

him my correspondence, I fixed my departure for the following day.

"In the afternoon I wrote to Celestina, requesting her permission to visit her on that evening. I found her much agitated at the thoughts of our approaching separation. I used every argument which I was capable of suggesting to calm her apprehensions. "I feel a sad foreboding," said she, "that we shall meet no more;" and presenting me with her picture, "take this," continued she, "and may it prove a solace to you in those hours of solitude and absence, which you will soon endure." "I receive it," I replied, "as a pledge of your affection; it will be a talisman to restrain me from error, and a consolation amidst all the calamities that may befal me. But whilst the remembrance of your virtues lives in my heart, what charm is necessary to animate my exertions?"

"I solicited that she would receive my letters, and permit me to hope that

she would sometimes write to me in reply.

"And when," added I, "I shall be enabled to revisit this beloved country, oh may I find you yet unchanged in your affection for your friend."—Here Mr. Hanbury paused, and his agitation was so excessive that Jessica entreated him to defer his story.

"The evening was now far advanced," continued he, "and I arose to depart. I lingered long on the spot which contained all that I held dear, before I could summon fortitude to tear myself from her. At last I took her hand, and bathing it with tears, entreated her to cherish my remembrance; and, hurrying from the house, pursued my way to the Marquis's.—When I arrived there I found a party of friends assembled at supper: my agitated manner and hurried looks seemed to have struck the Marchioness, for I saw her look particularly at her husband on my entering the room.

" During the evening I recollected myself sufficiently to speak of my intended voyage, and of the grateful sense I entertained of the hospitality I had met with, and my hope of returning at some future period to Italy. I mentioned to Mr. Mortimer my wish to leave Naples early the following morning.

" As I was unwilling to disturb the Marquis at an hour in which he was not accustomed to rise, previous to my retiring, after the company had withdrawn, I went up to his dressing-room, to bid the Marchioness and himself farewel. He took my hand, " Adieu, my dear friend," said he, pressing it between his, " I shall rejoice in your return to Naples; and whenever you think of Italy I trust you will include myself and the Marchioness amongst those who in this country have valued your society; I hope your father will be able to enjoy your company, and that you will be

cheered by witnessing his restoration to health.

" I once more expressed my acknowledgements for their kindness, and taking leave of them both, I retired to my own apartment.

CHAPTER XIV.

Then whilst his throbbing veins beat high,
With ev'ry impulse of delight,
Dash from his lips the cup of joy,
And shroud the scene in shades of night.
ROSCOE.

"EARLY in the following morning we quitted that place, which had been the seat of happiness, departed to return, I feared, no more.

"My heart was lacerated by contending emotions. I had left that object most dear to me, left her exposed to the power of a rival, of a man whom she detested; and to the tyranny of a father whom she dreaded. I was returning to England, after an absence of three years, to witness the declining state of my father's health, and in the feeble hope

of combating those prejudices which he had nourished almost from infancy.

"Our voyage was tedious; but the hope of hearing from my friends in Italy on my arrival in England, supported me under the anxieties of my situation. At length we landed in England, and I hastened to my home with that impatience which a long absence excites. But, oh G—d! what were the agonies I experienced when I learned that my father was no more.

"On enquiring for my brother we were informed that he had left the house immediately on the death of my father, but that he was daily expected.

"I gave myself up to the sorrow which that sad event had awakened. I traversed every apartment where I had sat with my father; I forgot every cause of anger, which he had occasioned me, and I only remembered that I should never more behold him.

" In the afternoon of that day I was waited on by the steward; " I took the liberty," said he, " of calling upon you, Sir, to welcome your return." I thanked him, but the effort I made to continue the conversation failed, and I waived my hand in silence.

" I feel for you, indeed, Sir," continued the steward, " but my master was, you know, Sir, very particular in his notions, and your lady being a Catholic" ——

" Sir," interrupted I in consternation, " to what is it you allude? I am not married, and I fear some fatal mistake may have embittered the last moments of my father."

" I am very sorry, indeed, Sir," he replied, " but my master understood that you had married a lady in Italy who was a Catholic, and it was in consequence of that that he has left his estates to your younger brother."

" I now perceived by whom I had been betrayed; I flew to Mr. Mortimer, and upbraided him with his perfidy, and I quitted the house with the intention of entering it no more.

" That I should have been cast off and deserted by my father in his last moments; should have fallen a victim to the arts of one man, and the mercenary designs of another; have been deceived by a friend on whom I had reposed, and betrayed by a brother whom from infancy I had loved, was a discovery which for a time annihilated all recollection of the past, all wish for the future, and seemed threatening to overturn my reason.

" At this period your father found me. He had been the companion of my early years, and I had greatly esteemed him; but I was suffering so much in consequence of the perfidy of those whom I had trusted, that I began to doubt the sincerity of all mankind.

" He entered into my sorrows with the sympathy of a friend: he used every means to reconcile me to my situation; and, but for his consoling attentions, I believe I should have retired in despair from the world.

" I now received letters from Italy: I had written to the Marquis on the subject of my father's death, but my letter could not have reached him.

" In his to me he mentioned Celestina, and spoke of her inviolable attachment. " You may console yourself," said he; " though separated from her, with the certainty of her affection.

" Alas, though mine for her had, if possible, encreased, what had I now to offer her! disinherited by my father, an alien from fortune: I loved her too much to involve her in my miseries.

" I wrote to her, and revealed my situation: I told her, that of the affluent prospects which once awaited me a bare pittance remained; and that though my

affection for her would only terminate with my life, I could no longer entreat her to unite herself with a man of broken fortunes.

" Her answer was such as from her I had anticipated, noble, generous, and disinterested; she spoke of her sufferings during my absence, and reproved me for that want of confidence in her affection, which my last letter indicated; and though she said she participated my sufferings, they had, if possible, encreased her attachment; that having been the cause of my present misfortunes would oblige her in justice, independent of affection, to endeavour to lighten the burthen by sharing it with me.

" I communicated her letter to your father, who advised that I should go over to Italy, and explain to her in person the situation in which I was left, and that if I then found her sentiments unchanged, not to sacrifice her happi-

ness and my own to a false delicacy, but to make her mine.

" Of the fortune of my father there was only a small part to which I could lay claim, and to that trifling part, which furnished only the means of existence, I was indebted to the relation who entailed it, after the death of my father, on me. I discovered from your father that my letters had been intercepted; that those which I had addressed to my father he had never received, and that he had lamented in bitter terms my ingratitude towards him; that Mr. Mortimer had written repeatedly to my brother, and mentioned very freely my attachment to an Italian lady; that I had unfortuately adverted to her in a letter soon after, and descanted warmly on her virtues.

" This letter," added your father, " agreed with the designs of your brother to make known; it gave a colour to the report which had previously reached his

father's ear, and when he was wavering between affection and resentment, he informed him that you were married.

" That you should have acted in defiance of every opinion that he had maintained, that you should not even have consulted him in a point on which your future happiness was so materially dependent, were, I believe, the sole reasons for his subsequent conduct.

" He has left, indeed, his estates to your brother, but the most miserable poverty will still be his ; unpossessed of that rectitude of heart which makes us rich in every situation, he will yet have cause to envy the victim of his baseness.

" I was deeply shocked when I learned the arts which my brother had practiced, for I knew not that such depravity had existed : I thought of him as a monster, a disgrace to human nature ; but I forgot not that he was the son of a man whom I respected, of a woman whose memory I venerated and adored ; and to lift my

hand against him, I considered would be a mode of revenge unworthy of my name or character. .

" My health from the time of my leaving Italy had sensibly declined, and I was now labouring under a malady of the worst kind, " a mind diseased."

" I wrote to my friends there, and gave the Marquis a brief account of all that had happened to me since my arrival in England; and I should have quitted that country, my return to which had only produced me misery, quitted, as I hoped, to return to it no more, but I was now too ill to allow of my traveling; and to that languor with which I was oppressed a fever succeeded, that seemed from its violence to exclude all hope of recovery.

" Your father, during this interval, watched over me with the most tender care, and made my comfort the object of his life. My disorder was lingering and painful, and the delirium which it

occasionally produced had weakened me to a degree of imbecility.

" He urged me strongly to return to Italy, but I was anxious before I left England to visit, for the last time, the abode of my infancy. I set out for that purpose: it was late in the evening when I arrived, and through those walks where I had so often rambled with my mother, I wandered with a melancholy pleasure.

" It was now the latter end of autumn, and the country around had assumed that cheerless aspect, which bore so striking a resemblance to my own fate, " my May of life had fallen into the seer, the yellow leaf," betrayed, deceived, and deserted, an outcast and a wanderer, shut out from my paternal mansion, a victim to the machinations of villany; these were the reflections that agonized my heart as I contemplated the scene of my departed happiness."

CHAPTER XV.

"For sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it requires what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled."

JOHNSON.

"THE night was now closing, and I found I must return to the inn, but I had an unquestionable desire to visit the room where I had been accustomed to read to my mother as she worked; I entered the house through a private door, and being acquainted with every avenue to it, I crossed the saloon, and came to her apartment; I paused at the door, and, overcome by the violence of my emotion, I wept aloud.

" I entered, and seated myself on a sopha opposite the chimney piece, and on raising my eyes I beheld her picture, " mild, pale and penetrating." There was the same expression of sweetness which had so eminently distinguished her.

" I determined to embrace the last opportunity I might have to possess myself of this sole surviving treasure, and went up to the mantle piece for that purpose, when at an opposite door I observed some person enter the room; I turned round, and I then perceived, through the uncertain gleam of twilight, the features of my brother.

" I gazed at him a moment, suspended between grief and indignation, but he fled: I now recollected that I was only an intruder, and, after securing the picture, I instantly left the house."

Here Mr. Hanbury stopt in convulsive agitation, and Jessica entreated that he would compose himself.

" For the present I returned to your father," continued he; " we passed one evening together, and the following day I set out on my voyage to Naples.

" It was long and tempestuous; but I was cheered with the hope of meeting again the object of my tenderest affections, and though six months had nearly elapsed since I had received intelligence of her, I rested confident in the idea of finding her unchanged.

" On my arrival, I hastened to the Marquis's, who received me with the most cordial welcome. I enquired for the Marchioness, and he informed me she had left him for a short period, to visit a friend; " but you have already, I suppose, received my letters," added he, for they must have reached England previous to your departure from thence."

" I have not heard from you," I replied, " for some months:" his countenance changed, and I then perceived his agitation. " Oh! tell me," implored

I, " the extent of my sufferings, she is then dead." " No, she is not dead, but you must arm yourself with fortitude to endure the thought, that she is lost to you. You must see her, my dear friend, no more; she is sacrificed to the ambition of her father, who has united her to the man whom she detested.

" Disturb not, then, any gleam of tranquility which, in such a situation, she may enjoy. Her endeavours to erase your image from her heart, ought, and may in time be successful."

" My agitation had now encreased nearly to madness; I accused him of being joined in the league to deceive me. I quitted his house, and wandered through the streets of Naples, regardless whither I went or what became of me. Existence was now rendered an insupportable burthen, every ray of hope had vanished, and in death alone could I look forward to a termination of misery.

" It was late at night when I arrived at the hotel, and on interrogating my servant, I was informed that a gentleman had called. I found it was the Marquis.

" Early in the morning he renewed his visit. " You parted from me last night," said he, " in a state of anger, which admitted neither of reason or explanation, but I knew you were unhappy, and that circumstance disarmed the resentment I should have felt in your unjust insinuations. I have now called upon you to satisfy my own mind, for the man who, having long known me, yet doubts my character, acts too unworthily of his own to be an object of my care."

" Reflection had shewn me the error of my conduct on our last interview: I sprung from my seat, and, entreating his forgiveness, I even wept.

Mr. Hanbury paused, and for some

minutes remained overpowered by his emotions.

" Excuse me," said he " Jessica, but the recollection of my sufferings, even at this distant period, unman's me.

" You know not, my friend," said the Marquis, " how much I have felt for you ; I exerted every energy in your cause, but your fate is now irremediable, and you must endeavour to support it. The Conte is jealous, fiery, and vindictive ; Celestina's only remaining hope of comfort rests on her own circumspection of conduct. He is apprized of her former attachment to you, from her repeated assurances that no other could possess her heart; and the man who would stoop to unite himself under such circumstances would, I should conceive, be capable of any degree of baseness.

" After your departure from hence I had frequent interviews with the Signor; I spoke of you often, I mentioned your future prospects, and at length I

ventured to hint at your attachment to his daughter; I thought that he appeared favourable to my wishes, and flattered myself that I should be the happy means of uniting two persons whom I so much esteemed. One day, however, when he called on me, he mentioned his intention of presenting his daughter in marriage to the Conte on an early day. "He has been too long trifled with already," said he; "and she must discard this foolish and romantic partiality for a foreigner and a man almost unknown."

"I remonstrated with him on the cruelty of such a sacrifice: "You will be answerable," I replied, "for all the future misery of your daughter's life; I know that she is attached to my English friend, and beloved by him in the tenderest degree; and what will your feelings tell you in a dying hour?—that you have given up your child a victim to idle ambition, and entailed remorse

and misery on yourself. I would spare you these sensations, by entreating you to desist."

" He seemed torn by contending passions; we parted in mutual anger, and on calling at his house in the evening I was informed that he had rode out with the Conte. I enquired for Celestina, and was shewn into an apartment where she sat. There was in her countenance an expression of wildness that alarmed me, and she seemed scarcely sensible of my presence.

"After sitting by her for some moments in silence, she took my hand: " Write to your friend," said she, " and tell him he must see me no more; but we shall meet again," laying her hand upon her heart, " we shall meet in that country where my miseries will terminate;" she paused in convulsive agitation.

" But why," said I, " should you thus sacrifice your happiness in an union unsanctioned by any consideration of mo-

rality or religion, and merely to gratify the aims of tyranny and oppression."

"My father," replied Celestina, "is under obligations to the Conte of a nature of which you are not aware; my misery, or his total ruin, are the only alternatives; but," grasping my arm, and looking wildly round the room, "has he not said, that my refusal must be sealed with blood: oh! God, shall I then refuse to save my father! no, it must be done, one only method remains, my father has debts of honour," continued she, lowering her voice, "which he cannot liquidate, the Conte has discharged those, and accepts me as the ransom; but to one being only must this fatal disclosure ever escape your lips.

"Vindicate me, then, to your friend; for the loss of his esteem would be indeed too bitter a sacrifice; tell him, for the last time, that I can never, oh never erase him from my heart; but if he

values my future peace, we must be separated.

" To resign myself to inevitable misfortune, though it may be a severe task, must be my only study; let not my life be embittered by the consciousness of yielding to a passion which would now be criminal."

She threw her arms around me, she wept on my neck, and I mingled my tears with her's." Here Mr. Hanbury again paused.

" Do not thus agitate yourself," said Jessica; " in your present state of health, the recapitulation of sorrows like your's must be very injurious."

" My unhappy story," said Mr. Hanbury, " is now, Jessica, near a conclusion. Oh! may it save you from the bitter pangs that must ever attend the encouragement of a hopeless affection; years have passed away since these sad events, and I have wandered through the world a stranger to peace. But I

shall find it in that grave to which I am now hastening."

"Do, sir," interrupted Jessica, "defer your narrative till another day." They now separated, as the evening was far advanced, and Mr. Hanbury retired to his own room.

The following morning, when he met Jessica at breakfast, he proposed to finish his history.

"After I had parted from Celestina," continued the Marquis, "I determined to write to you, for though, under present circumstances, I had no alternative to propose which could have availed, I felt it a duty that I owed to you, to inform you of the events that had followed your departure; I addressed my packet to the house of your late father, and that will account for it's not having reached you.

"The morning after I had written to you, I was visited by the Signor, who called to request I would be present at

the nuptials of the Conte with his daughter. My aversion to the Signor had now arisen to detestation, I had before only thought of him as a tyrant, I now regarded him as a monster, who, for his own sake, would sacrifice his child, and doom her to perpetual misery.

" I hesitated whether to comply with or refuse his request, but the idea that my presence might afford consolation to Celestina, determined me: remonstrances would now have been vain, her fate was determined, and I prepared myself to witness this last act of tyranny.

" On the evening of the next day I set out for Naples, and when I arrived at the Signor's, I found the party already assembled, except Celestina, who, attended by one of her female friends, now entered the apartment.

" There was an expression of meek solemnity in her countenance, an air of settled melancholy about her, when she addressed me, that made my heart sink.

She gave me her hand, I led her the Conte, and her look,—oh, God! never shall I forget that look, which seemed to bid a last farewell to every shadow of happiness.

"The ceremony was performed, during which she seemed lost in meditation, but as I glanced my eye towards her, I observed the tears start from her eyes, and chace each other down her cheek: that one moment alone, betrayed the anguish of her heart; most religiously has she fulfiled the duties of a wife, and endured, without a murmur, the miseries of her fate.

"And now my friend," continued the Marquis, "forgive me if I urge you to depart; apprized, as the Conte already is, of your unfortunate attachment, your longer residence in Naples may endanger the peace of Celestina, and can add nothing to your comfort.

"Return, then, to your native country, and in an union with some amiable

woman endeavour to efface the remembrance of the past, which can only fill you with regret, injurious to your own mental restoration, and unavailing to the object of it. May your peace be soon reestablished, for there is no individual in the world whose happiness is dearer in interest to me."

CHAPTER XVI.

In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which, though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame;
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
As thou, being mine, mine is thy good report.

SHAKESPEARE.

"THIS was the last interview which was permitted me with the Marquis, the chain was broken by the hand of death, and amongst the various calamities which I have suffered, few ever pressed more heavily on my heart: for in my separation from that valued friend,

I lost the only bond which seemed still to unite me to Celestina.

" There was none to whom I could impart my sorrows, who had known the object, or participated in my feelings. I brooded over the past with settled despair, and nourished, as a fond mother nourishes her infant, the recollections which were destroying me.

" The world was all before me where to choose." Your father, then, the only tie which bound me to the earth, had claims which I held sacred; and I determined to return to him. How often, as I hung over the deck during my melancholy voyage, did I long to bury my griefs in that illimitable ocean, the object of my frequent contemplation, in whose agitated bosom I beheld the conflicts of my own.

" Returning to my own country, ruined alike in fortune and in peace, the barbed arrow rankling in my heart; my infant days had glided along like

the smooth stream on whose borders I had so often sported, ignorant, happily ignorant, of the miseries which were in store for me. The prospect was changed, and the scene before me was the emblem of my own fortune, gloomy and tempestuous.

" I passed whole evenings on deck, absorbed in bitterness of thought, only interrupted by the deep tone of the watch word as it sounded on my ear.

" Music, of which I was always passionately fond, afforded me a momentary suspension from unhappy meditation, and with my little flageolet did I sometimes attempt to beguile my lonely hours.

" There is a charm in harmony which must strike on every feeling heart; a sympathy in music peculiarly consolatory; there have been moments of my life when, sunk in despair, it's fine tones have softened me to tears, and tended more forcibly to meliorate my grief, than

any effort of philosophy could have effected; and when I played some of those simple airs which Celestina had taught me, I forgot my afflictions whilst associating her image with the remembrance of that melody which had so often and so powerfully affected me.

" After a tedious passage, I arrived in England, and hastened to your father, whom I found in solitude and sorrow; he had recently lost your mother, of the particulars of whose death you, my dear Jessica, are well informed.

" My arrival was opportune, and the exertion which I was under the necessity of using in the presence of your father, perhaps, greatly tended to my own restoration. After some time had elapsed, he proposed to me to embrace a professional employment, which, by engrossing my time, might in some degree divert my thoughts.

" I revolved many plans in my mind, and at length decided in favour of the church.

"To your father's kind interest I am indebted, in great part, for my present support; for by his introduction to a friend, who presented me to the preferment I now hold, do I possess the means of existence.

"The bond of friendship, my dear girl, the grave has not cancelled; for the regard which I bore to your father has descended to his children, has twined itself round every fibre of my heart, and will live there until I cease to exist."

Jessica threw her arms round him and wept, for his death was a topic which she could never endure to dwell upon. She wished much to have made some enquiry respecting the fate of Celestina; but as it was a subject which Mr. Hanbury had avoided, and on which he might be ignorant, she forbore any further mention of it.

CHAPTER XVII.

His deep, dark eye was stern and keen,
It was the fire of soul unseen,
Unknown, untutor'd, unexpress'd.

ANON.

JESSICA now prepared to call on her friend Matilda, whom she had not seen for some days, and she felt particularly anxious to hear of Mr. Bamford's health. On her arrival at their lodgings she had the satisfaction of finding him so much better as to propose a ramble, and they all set out for that purpose.

Whilst wandering in the environs of the town, and occasionally making pauses to remark the beauty of its situation and scenery, their attention was arrested by the sight of a woman with

two infant children, addressing her complaint, in a tone of deep distress, to a stranger, who appeared to be listening to her with compassionate interest.

He put something into her hand, and observing their party, suddenly disappeared amongst the trees.

They walked on, without remarking to each other this incident. The sweet tones of a flute now struck upon their ear, and turning round, they discovered the same gentleman seated under a branch of one of the trees. He arose however at their approach, and ceased to play.

There was an expression of sentiment in his countenance, something of penetration in his fine dark eyes, which interested Jessica, and she wished, without being able to define the cause, that she might have another opportunity of making her observations. "If," said she to Matilda, "the countenance be an index of the mind, how much is

contained there," looking at the stranger as she spoke.

Matilda smiled at the warmth of her expression. "That gentleman," said she, "is an Italian, whom I find is almost unknown to every one here; he seems to avoid society whilst others court it, and is generally wandering alone, as you now see him."

Jessica raised her eyes, which met the stranger's, and her's were instantly cast down; few persons indeed could have borne without emotion the fixed gaze of that eye, which penetrated wherever its glance was directed; yet there was something in the expression of it, which seemed to say that all was not peace within.

As the party passed him he was under the necessity of stepping back, on account of the narrowness of the path, and, as his foot caught some part of Jessica's gown, he slightly bowed in apology; it was but a passing bow, yet

in every movement there appeared an air peculiar to himself, something which is seldom met with, and not to be described; that manner which is the result of sentiment and education.

This little incident made an impres-pression on the mind of our fair Englishwoman, and she mentioned the circumstance and appearance of the stranger to Mr. Hanbury.

A few mornings after, as Matilda was seated at her work by the side of Jessica, and Mr. Hanbury was engaged with a book, she said Mr. Bamford had discovered the name of the stranger, who had taken apartments in the same house with them; that he had called upon him the day before, and his name was Valdesa.

Jessica, who had raised her head on this information, was struck by the change in the countenance of Mr. Hanbury; but before she could make any further enquiry, "Valdesa," said he, "is

a name familiar to me," and sighing deeply, rose, as if to walk away the sense of what he felt.

Jessica well knew how powerfully any circumstance or person that had any connection with Italy affected Mr. Hanbury, and she instantly changed the subject; but though she would have been very unwilling to have confessed such a sensation, yet certainly that of pleasure vibrated at her heart, on the information of her friend, and the possibility which it afforded of an introduction to this Italian, who had so much interested her.

The following morning, however, her thoughts were diverted to a different and far less pleasing object. She had written to England, stating her anxiety respecting her brother, and requesting some information of him. What were her sensations on receiving a letter from the gentleman whom she had addressed on the subject, mentioning that he be-

lieved Mr. Greville had quitted England in consequence of some disgraceful proceedings at his college, in which he had been implicated, but that of his present place of residence or future intentions, he was utterly ignorant.

In the deepest sorrow, and lost in perplexity on her brother's account, Jessica hesitated whether to reveal this affair to Mr. Hanbury; but fearing that he might conjecture some circumstance yet more distressing to his feelings, she laid the letter before him.

After reading it, he sat for some moments ruminating in silence, and taking her hand, "Jessica, my love," said he, "though my expectations of the welfare of Charles have, from his various imprudencies, long ceased to be sanguine, I had hoped that he possessed sufficient feeling to have rendered him considerate for you at least; but now my hopes of protection for you from that source have totally failed, and when

deprived of me, you must be unprotected. Would that there was any one to whose care with full confidence I could commit so sacred a trust!"

Jessica turned from him, to conceal the tears which flowed from her eyes at this last sentence; she now regretted that she had concealed from Mr. Hanbury those errors of conduct in Charles, with which she had become acquainted previous to their quitting England; but the promise which she had made to him, unworthy as he had proved, still remained in force.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Some joy too fine, too subtle, potent, tun'd
too sharp in sweetness for the capacity of my
ruder powers.

SHAKESPEARE.

Jessica proposed to Mr. Hanbury to accompany her to her friend's house the following evening, and, averse as he was from the idea of entering into society, he could not, in her dejected state of mind, refuse her any request, and promised to be of the party.

The evening arrived, which Jessica had anticipated with unusual pleasure; perhaps from a latent hope that she should again be so fortunate as to meet with her new acquaintance, if an acquaintance he could be termed. She wished not, however, to analyze the

the cause, and it was placed to Matilda's account.

She was not deceived in hope, when the door was opened and Valdesa entered the room; Valdesa, dignified and polished, as her ardent imagination had pictured him.

Too much absorbed in her own observations, Jessica did not remark the emotion of Mr. Hanbury, on the stranger's being introduced to him; but when the name of Valdesa again sounded on his ear, she then beheld the varying countenance of her paternal friend.

From what cause could those feelings, which seemed to agitate his heart, and which were visible in every movement, arise? Valdesa was an Italian it was true; but since the melancholy æra of Mr. Hanbury's connection in that country he must have been thrown into the society of some native of Italy ere now: no, that could not be the cause; and it was not until Valdesa had entered into

an animated description of the beauties of his country, that Jessica apprehended the real state of Mr. Hanbury's feelings, whilst, in language the most striking and unaffected, Valdesa was giving them the history of his travels. From the political state of Italy, it's religion was adverted to.

"That is a subject," said Mr. Hanbury, "on which I seldom enter, and never without reluctance; it is too sacred to the feelings of every man to dwell upon with that coolness which discussion requires. I have felt, sensibly felt, the miseries arising from a difference on this point, and have seen too forcibly the animosity which it is calculated to excite."

He withdrew to a window at some distance, and appeared lost in thought. Valdesa now turned to Jessica, and addressed some remarks to her: the conversation turned on painting and music; in the latter of these sciences she was

pre-eminently excellent, and she soon discovered that in their admiration of it they were congenial.

"I believe," said Jessica, "I had a specimen of your skill on one instrument during a saunter in the environs of this place a few mornings since, and I should indeed feel much gratified if you would favour us with a repetition of the air that you were then playing."

"That air," replied Valdesa, "you, perhaps, never before heard: I acquired it from one beloved, and now no more; and sometimes in my solitary hours I indulge myself by calling to remembrance the variety of situations under which I have listened to it's melody.

"The whole universe would not tempt me to forego the sensations which it produces, though often mingled with the bitterest regret.

"When parted from some dear friend, perhaps excluded the possibility of ever meeting them more, how any object,

however unimportant, with which we associate, their image strikes on the senses, and vibrates through every chord of the heart. Thus is it with me, whilst playing that air which you accidentally overheard."

Mr. Hanbury now attentively regarded Valdesa, for the sentiment was in unison with his own, and he acknowledged it's truth, more by looks than by words.

Valdesa now withdrew, and returning with his flute began by playing some of the gay tunes of his native country. He hesitated a moment, and those were changed for that little air, wild, simple, and affecting, which Jessica had before heard: he paused, he ceased to play, for the groans of Mr. Hanbury were now heard.

The air was indeed familiar to him; it was oneof his beloved long-lost Celestina's, which he had taught her, and now at this distant period to hear it thus feelingly played, 'twas like the restoration

of a friend from whom countries and years had divided him. Overcome by his emotions, he leaned against the window, his hand resting on his forehead.

Jessica was excessively shocked on witnessing his agitation; he recovered himself, however, so far as to thank Valdesa for his exertions. "Some time," continued he, "you may, perhaps, be acquainted with the cause of those emotions which you have involuntarily excited.

"That little air reminds me of joys departed, never to return." "How," interrupted Valdesa, "have you heard it? one only being did, I suppose, acquainted with it's melody; over her the cold grave has closed; she loved it, and when I play it I can still fancy her form is hovering round me whilst I fondly cherish the remembrance of her virtues. It was taught her by a friend, whom she tenderly valued, but he was torn from her, and she saw herself

united to a man insensible of her worth, of the value of her character. Oh, my mother, you rest in peace, the grave has terminated your sorrows, and taught him to whom you sacrificed your happiness the worth of that treasure which he cast away."

He ceased, and Mr. Hanbury, springing into his arms, exclaimed, "Then you are indeed the child of my Celestina, and from this moment behold me as a father."

It was indeed the son of Celestina, beloved, and for years regretted, whose remembrance had poisoned his felicity, and on whose account every enjoyment had been destroyed.

Valdesa had not remained thus long a stranger to the fatal attachment which his mother had felt for Mr. Hanbury, and he was surprised that he had not before been struck by a name long since familiar to his ear.

Neglected by the Conte, the society of Valdesa, was the only ray of comfort, which had darted in upon the cheerless existence of Celestina. To him she had been so long accustomed to impart her sorrows, that he was early initiated in the school of misery, used to regard her as a superior being, every sentiment which she had uttered was indeliby engraven on his heart.

She often descanted on the virtues of her English friend, and Valdesa was prepared to love and revere him for her sake.

He entered into the history of Celestina's sufferings from the period of her marriage, and spoke of the Marchioness with the tenderest esteem; of her attachment to his mother in that last scene of suffering which closed her earthly existence.

In this conversation did the party beguile the hours till nearly midnight, when Mr. Hanbury and Jessica took

their leave, claiming from Valdesa a promise that he would pay them an early visit.

The following morning he called upon them, and they walked out till dinner, when Mr. Hanbury requested that Valdesa would spend the remainder of the day with them.

In the evening their party was encreased by the company of Mr. and Mrs. Bamford, who assisted them in forming a little concert, to which Mr. Hanbury listened with enthusiastic delight.

In all his moments of sorrow or abstraction music never failed to operate most powerfully on his mind; and as he dwelt on his favorite airs the tear would steal down his cheek, and the sigh of sympathy would burst from his heart; that heart, the seat every virtue, whose benevolent throbbings no ingratitude could stifle, or disappointment overcome.

CHAPTER XIX.

" Le naufrage & la mort sont moins funestes
" que les plaisirs qui attaquent la vertu."

FENELON.

" Shipwreck and death are less dangerous than
" the pleasures that attack virtue."

MONTHS had now elapsed, and no letter from Charles had yet arrived; he had set out on his career of dissipation, entered on without reflection, and terminating in guilt. His addiction to the fatal practice of gaming had involved him in difficulties inextricable; for it had introduced him to the society of a young and fascinating, though unprincipled woman of high rank, whose house was a rendezvous for gamesters, and where they met with every en-

couragement that the sanction of a title and consequence could bestow.

Flattered with the marks of attention, which were lavished upon him by his fair hostess, and allured by her charms, Charles saw not the miseries which she was preparing for him. Happier would it have been for him, if he had never strayed beyond the roof of the worthy Hanbury, or rejected his admonitions.

His irregularities were become so public, and his contempt of all controul or discipline so notorious in the regiment, that he had lost the countenance of the worthier part of his associates, who could no longer tolerate practices, which might have stigmatized their own reputation.

This young man, dissipated and misguided as was his conduct, was far from happy: reflection would obtrude, and the voice of his father sounding from the grave, would sometimes be heard. But

the first barrier was borne down, and he was swept away by the resistless tide.

One morning, on going to the house of his friend lady Selwyn, and being admitted to her dressing room, Charles found it unoccupied; and, seating himself by the fire, awaited her ladyship's appearance. She opened the door suddenly, and found him in a musing attitude.

"I would not interrupt your reverie," said she, on his rising to meet her, when he first perceived her enter, and then rallying him, in a gay tone, on his absence of mind, she saw his embarrassment, and apparent desire to change the subject.

The conversation afterwards turned on the adventures of the evening preceding: "I think," said Charles, "I must have done paying my devoirs at the shrine of dame Fortune, for she's been playing off so many of her slippery tricks upon me lately, that i'faith I am even now more than half ruined."

This was the very confession that her ladyship had been thus long artfully endeavouring to extort: intriguing, and unprincipled, she had felt herself captivated by the manners and appearance of Charles Greville, and now only wished for an opportunity of binding him wholly in her chains. Could she prevail with him to accept of pecuniary obligations, she thought this would be effected.

There was a time when Charles would have shrunk with contempt from a proposal of this nature; but that destructive vice, in which he had indulged, had destroyed the native independence of his spirit, and eradicated that *nice* sense of honour, which cannot exist in the bosom of a gamester.

"You must not, however," said her ladyship, seizing upon this pause in the conversation. "you must not so lightly resign the palm to your competitors; come, suppose you enlist under my ban-

ners, and surely we shall then be able to set fortune at defiance. I am now, you must know, on the point of making a little voyage to Nice; cannot you obtain leave of absence for a few months?" Charles hesitated at the proposal, saying he feared it would not be practicable: "At all events," she added, "it is only disposing of your commission until you feel the amor patria very strongly upon you.

"But, however, as I expect you at a little faro party this evening, you are acquainted with the terms; at present I am to be your banker, and when my resources fail, then you must be mine.

"Adieu, I shall leave you to your ruminations, in which you were so deeply absorbed when I came in; for I have letters to write which will employ me for the remainder of the morning;" and then hastily quitting the apartment, she left him to his own reflections.

Poor Charles! how lost, how fallen,

accepting pecuniary obligations from a woman worthless as lady Selwyn, and who derived all that she possessed from the mistaken generosity, if so it could be called when applied to her, of a weak ill-judging man.

In the evening Charles arrived at her ladyship's house before the party was assembled; and she then asked if he had considered of her proposal: he paused for a reply, and piqued at his hesitation, "The matter," said she, "is scarcely worth deliberation; if you like to be of my party abroad it is well;" and turning to him with one of those fascinating smiles which she could so well assume, "but if you have any superior inducement to remain in England, do not hesitate, I beseech you."

Charles, seizing her hand, assured her that her society must always form the first inducement with him, and convey a sensation of bliss that no other could inspire. He entreated her ladyship's par-

don for his apparent hesitation ; and she was again restored to good humour.

Charles Greville's devoirs had flattered her ladyship's vanity ; she saw that he was admired by her sex, and she flattered herself that she reigned sole object : this was a triumph over her acquaintance, and gratified her vanity, affection she had none to bestow, for the woman who, whilst united to one man, endeavours to engross the attentions of another, is too depraved to be capable of admitting so refined a sensation.

Their conversation was for the present terminated by the arrival of some part of the company.

The party played high, and, as usual, Charles was unfortunate, and returned home with the resolution of giving up that destructive amusement; but he yeilded to every day's temptation, and his mind had become so vitiated by the society of gamesters, that he seemed only to exist when surrounded by them.

He had secretly determined to accept of lady Selwyn's invitation to Nice; not that change of place afforded him any satisfaction, but his reflections were become so insupportable, that he sought, in killing time, to drown them.

CHAPTER XX.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace:
And she forgave him that he gaz'd
Too fondly on her face.

WORDSWORTH'S POEMS.

VALDESA was now the constant companion of Mr. Hanbury and Jessica in all their rides and walks, and generally passed his evenings at their house. Each succeeding day they found something more to esteem and admire in that young man; yet there human nature was not exhibited without some shade. Perhaps his virtues received additional lustre by the contrast with his failings.

Valdesa, it has been already premised, was an Italian, and consequently had

the prejudices of his country, though those extended not beyond opinion, and never interfered with the happiness or harmony of those around him; nay, there were moments in which he wished he had received those impressions which so frequently form the character in after life, in any country rather than in his own. He was conscious of the weakness which tainted even his strong mind, yet, as is not uncommon, he yielded too often to its influence.

Jessica was much delighted on observing the evident change which the society of Valdesa had produced in Mr. Hanbury; nor did one particle of jealousy obtrude itself on her mind, or damp the pleasure she felt, when she saw with what avidity he sought the company of Valdesa. Jessica's heart was too purely distinterested for the reception of such petty sensations.

Valdesa felt and acknowledged her worth, and never, perhaps, did he ap-

pear to more advantage than whilst, in Jessica's absence, he dwelt so minutely on her praises.

"Are all your fair countrywomen like Jessica?" he sometimes passionately asked; Mr. Hanbury smiled at the enthusiasm with which he spoke. "Will you return with us to England," replied he, "and form your own opinion?" "Ah! no," Valdesa exclaimed, "I shall find none like Jessica, amiable and disinterested."

Sometimes, on suddenly opening the door, she indistinctly caught her name, and when she found that she had been the subject of Valdesa's conversation, would turn to the window to conceal her emotions.

The superior mind and insinuating manners of Valdesa had made a powerful impression on Jessica's heart, and Mr. Hanbury's affection for him seemed to justify the prepossession; yet in all the hours she had passed in his society,

no expression beyond the boundaries of esteem had ever escaped his lips; and her native strong sense of delicacy prevented her expressing, even to her paternal friend, the smallest part of what she felt. Yet Mr. Hanbury sometimes, when sitting alone with Jessica, observed her frequent abstraction of mind, and the emotion which she betrayed when Valdesa was the subject.

She no longer talked of returning to England with the cheerfulness which was wont to exhibit itself when Mr. Hanbury used to speak of his plans on their arrival in that country. Jessica had lost too something of her former animation, and when Mr. Hanbury hinted at the change, she pleaded anxiety on her brother's account, and want of health, as the cause.

The last of these reasons alarmed him, and he frequently urged her to have some medical advice, which she uniformly declined. Valdesa continued to visit

them daily, and one evening, when Jessica had quitted the room, Mr. Hanbury mentioned to him his apprehensions on her account. "I fear," said he, "that she may have deceived me, previous to our leaving England; I interrogated her, as to the state of her affections, and she assured me they were wholly in her own power; yet, since our arrival here, she has become dejected, even to melancholy, and I confess myself wholly unable to penetrate the cause."

Valdesa was alarmed also; for the nature of his sentiments respecting Jessica he could no longer conceal from himself, and the idea that there was some one, whose remembrance she was sorrowfully cherishing, was too much for him to support. He encreased his former assiduities, and watched over her with the tenderest solicitude.

One day when Mr. Hanbury, exhausted by a long walk, had retired to his chamber, Jessica was arranging some

music, when Valdesa entered the room. Absorbed in painful reflection on an incident which Mr. Hanbury had been speaking of, she had seated herself on the sopha, and Valdesa approached unobserved. He saw the tears fall from her eyes, as she repeated the following stanza:

" Thus restless exiles doom'd to roam,
" Meet pity every where,
" Yet languish for their native home,
" Though death awaits them there."

" Ah!" he exclaimed to himself " it is then too true, she has indeed, I find, entrusted her affections to the care of some happy being, whose absence she secretly deplores; valuable, enviable deposit! May he prove himself worthy of the trust!"

Jessica now rose from her seat in some confusion, and when Valdesa enquired after Mr. Hanbury, she said that he had found himself indisposed, and was gone to lie down.

" Mr. Hanbury I think," said Valdesa, " appears benefited by his voyage, though, perhaps, from some accidental cause he may not to-day feel himself well, but his spirits are certainly in some degree restored, and the mind is so intimately connected with the body that in general we find in our relief from mental anxiety a perfect restoration of personal health."

Valdesa looked earnestly at Jessica whilst he spoke; she however made no reply to this last observation, but soon after mentioned the return of Mr. Hanbury and herself to England.

" That is a subject," said Valdesa, " which I have frequently remarked you dwell on with pleasure; but England is your " native home," and it is, perhaps, not extroadinary, that you should sigh to revisit it."

Jessica now recollected the stanza she was repeating when Valdesa's entrance had surprised her, and his em-

phasis on the expression, "native home," raised a blush which he observed, and anxious to change the subject, he proposed a walk, to which Jessica assented.

They called on Matilda, who had rode out; and Jessica was under the necessity of walking with Valdesa unaccompanied by her friend. This, in her present state of mind, was not pleasant, but she had no alternative.

It was a fine afternoon in the latter end of October, and Valdesa remarked whilst they were wandering near Montpelier, how much the clear blue azure which he now observed, reminded him of an Italian sky.

"Perhaps," continued he, "there is something in an autumnal aspect that impresses the mind with different, and more mingled sensations, than any other season of the year. In spring we gradually observe nature unfold her sweets; and in summer are cheered by enjoying their fruition; "but autumn speaks of pleasure past, and bodes approaching pain."

" I have frequently wandered alone for hours together in this season of the year, and have often been struck by the analogy which the state of vegetable nature bears to that of man: our hopes spring up, they blossom, and they fade, and the many coloured tints of autumn are not, perhaps, more variegated than our own existence.

" How many, loved and cherished in the spring of life, are torn from the earth, and leave us to mourn in desolation; some, after expanding the buds of affection, and nourishing us by their love, withdraw from us its fragrance, and blast each rising joy! How dreary is the winter that succeeds, when our hopes are thus blighted, and the heart becomes a desert waste, where no sweets arise to beguile us on our path, when all around is joyless."

To this sentiment, Jessica feelingly assented; she thought of her brother far away, and, regardless of what she suf-

fered, and at the conclusion of her sentence, her tears flowed fast.

" Yet, how many" she replied, " are the remembrances which cling to the heart, and animate it with joy.

" Amongst the idle ephemera of the world, I admit there is little to excite pleasure, but there is a charm in the esteem of the virtuous part of society, which I think no pain, that it might hereafter produce, would tempt me to forego.

" The idea of being beloved by one individual in creation, who merited my regard, would cheer me in sickness, in sorrow or in poverty; though countries intervened to separate us. For notwithstanding it is the peculiar attribute of friendship to magnify the distance which divides it from the object, yet the mind, free and unconfined to space, will dwell there, and uninterruptedly enjoy the delightful union."

Jessica became animated whilst she

spoke, and Valdesa gazed on her with rapture. "You," replied he, "I doubt not speak feelingly, and whilst every sentiment you utter adds to my conviction of your worth, it encreases my regret. How happy, and how enviable the being to whom you have pledged your affections!"

Jessica smiled at this warmth of expression, and assured him that she had never yet met with that being to whom he alluded.

Valdesa's agitation was excessive, and displayed itself in every turn of his countenance. "And is there none," said he, "who has yet been so fortunate as to obtain an interest in your heart? but how few indeed are worthy of a place there! how few, in whom to hope for such a distinction, would not be weakness and presumption!" He paused, he saw the tears start from her eyes, and chace each other down her cheek.

"If," added he, "the deepest con-

viction of your worth, the tenderest esteem, and the most unbounded admiration of your admirable qualities, can give me aught of merit in your eyes, unworthy as I feel myself, to solicit a treasure dearer to my heart than the united treasures of the world, suffer me to hope that you will bestow on me some portion of that esteem which you have declared no other to possess.

" In asking this, I injure the rights of no one; many, I doubt not, have been sesible of your virtues, of the value of your character; but none have loved like me! Ah, no! since I first had the happiness of meeting you, your society has given a zest to my existence, and the hope, feeble as it has been, of sharing with you the remainder of my life, was all that has since rendered it desirable."

Jessica turned to him with that mild, yet dignified expression, which so eminently distinguished her; and in lan-

guage simple and unaffected, acknowledged the impression which Valdesa's virtues had made on her heart.

" To you then," she said," I will be a friend and comforter whilst you remain deserving of the place I have given you in my esteem, but should any latent unworthiness hereafter appear, the bond is cancelled, and we part to meet no more."

Jessica was superior to that species of coquetry, which torments itself, for the sake of wounding the feelings of another.

Dignified in her ideas, and delicate in every feeling of her heart, her attachment to Valdesa no circumstance but this candid declaration on his part, would ever have extorted from her: but the time was past when that reserve was called for; and she acknowledged, in a manner that did honour to her heart and understanding, her sense of Valdesa's merits. She had long regard-

ed him with the tenderest esteem, but she retired to be chosen. No moment of weakness betrayed the secret of her heart, she rested secure in her own fortitude, and in that sense of female delicacy, which on no occasion she lost sight of.

Valdesa was charmed with the diffidence of her manners, and fascinated by the graces of her mind. He had contemplated at a distance, and in silent admiration, the treasure which he was now soon to call his own; every day encreased his happiness, as it added conviction of Jessica's worth.

Mr. Hanbury was delighted with the growing attachment of his young friends. The thought of leaving his ward exposed and unprotected, to cope with the difficulties that might assail her, in a world of which she knew so little, had often pressed heavily on his mind; and occasioned him severe anxiety.

Valdesa was the son of her whom Mr. Hanbury had so fondly loved; it was not then extraodinary, that some part of that regard had devolved on him, which had been so long centered in hs mother.

" No," Mr. Hanbury would often say, " I regret not, my dear Jessica, the circumstance of parting from you, when I reflect into whose care I commit you: Valdesa cannot be unworthy, there are shades which obscure the brilliancy of every character, and, perhaps, a slight disposition to reserve, alone clouds that of our friend: but the son of my beloved Celestina, educated under her auspices, must be deserving of the happiness which awaits him."

CHAPTER XXI.

> And so I won my Genevieve,
> My young and beauteous bride.
>
> WORDSWORTH'S POEMS.

THE period which Mr. and Mrs. Bamford had assigned for their residence in Montpelier had elapsed, and it was not without regret that Jessica learned the intention of Matilda to depart within a few days.

The health of her husband was considerably amended since their arrival in France, and her anxiety to return to her sisters overcame the reluctance which she felt on the idea of parting from her English friends. Mr. Bamford had experienced much pleasure in the society of Jessica and Mr. Hanbury: the pro-

bability afforded to the latter of ever meeting them more in this life was feeble, and he felt particular regret on the circumstance of their separation, though not so poignant as that which oppressed the heart of Jessica; for Mr. Hanbury had so frequently and so bitterly laboured under sensations like these, that his mind was in a great degree weaned, from a keen sensibility, to the pleasures and pains attendant on human intercourse. He had been severed from the friend dearest to his heart; he saw himself torn from her, for whom alone existence was a blessing. The world had nothing to bestow in compensation for his loss, and he endured rather than enjoyed the things of this life. Yet his soul, fortified by the spirit of religion, which imparts a consolation that human philosophy in vain endeavours to effect, and supported by the consciousness of rectitude, without whose influence the mind knows not

a shadow of happiness, rose above those temporary evils.

To suffer from the vice and weakness of persons around us, is not a calamity compared with what those endure who labour under the bitter consciousness of their own unworthiness. This Mr. Hanbury had never felt; he had never experienced the extreme of misery.

Jessica prepared herself for the last interview with her friends. It had been previously agreed, that, after the union of Valdesa and Jessica, they were to return to England, where she hoped to rejoin Matilda.

But notwithstanding the probability of their again meeting, heavy forebodings clouded the spirits of Jessica on this evening, which was to close their present intercourse.

The hours seemed more rapid in their flight than usual, and it was not till the clock sounded the hour of twelve that she was roused to the recollection that

it was time to depart, since the vessel in which the travellers had taken their passage was to sail at an early hour, the following morning.

Mr. Hanbury, however, first motioned to take leave; for Jessica yet lingered, and seemed reluctant to pronounce her farewell. She at length went up to Matilda, and, kissing her cold cheek, entreated her to be comforted in the hope of their soon meeting each other again; and, after an affectionate adieu to Mr. Bamford, Mr. Hanbury and herself returned home.

Jessica had parted, for the first time in her life, with a *friend*; her emotions were new and afflicting. Jessica was not sensible how many scenes of a similar nature she must encounter in her journey through life, and the present seemed of importance. The blossoms of hope were only budding in her spring of youth; they had not been nipped by the cruel blight of disappointment.

She was now in a situation to look forward only to joy and happiness, blest in the affections of him whom she had selected as the partner of her cares, the companion of her future life.

In the character of Valdesa, it was true, Jessica had discovered some shades, but as human nature is never exhibited without imperfection, she looked not for it, even in the chosen of her heart.

Mr. Hanbury observed, frequently with concern, a tendency in Valdesa to indulge those weaknesses, the characteristic of his country, a proneness to suspicion, and some degree of irritability of mind. In these moments Mr. Hanbury felt tremblingly anxious for the future peace of his beloved ward, whose every shadow of comfort must soon be wholly in the power of Valdesa, to whom he was to resign her previous to their leaving Montpelier. That period had nearly arrived, and Valdesa, anxious for the completion of his happiness, pleaded

for their early union, to which Mr. Hanbury consented.

When Jessica was urged to a concurrence in their wishes, with that amiable candour which marked her character and formed one of its best traits, she acceded to the petition.

Though it was no very distant period since the commencement of her acquaintance with Valdesa, yet in an uninterrupted intercourse she had an opportunity of investigating his character with more certainty than could have resulted from a longer acquaintance under different circumstances. His virtues and his foibles were each, she thought, thoroughly known to her; the time was approaching when, in a nearer and dearer communion, those were to develope themselves more fully.

At length the sun of that morning arose which shone on the union of Jessica and Valdesa, and beheld her a young and lovely bride; young in the know-

ledge of mankind, their vices and their follies, and lovely in the innocence and rectitude of her heart.

To Mr. Hanbury it was, indeed, an eventful morning, and his feelings were too powerful for utterance when he pronounced a blessing on the children of those two beings dearer to him than any which the world had afforded. The affection which he felt for his deceased friends seemed to have descended to the young pair; words would have been inadequate to have conveyed the sentiments of his heart, and he retired to his closet to pour them out in secret before the Father of the Universe.

He then returned to Jessica, with calmness of mind and serenity of heart.

Valdesa appeared all rapture in the attainment of that object which he had so ardently coveted; and Jessica smiled on him with love and approbation.

"May this scene long, long continue," said the worthy Hanbury as he affec-

tionately embraced them, and may each revolving year witness your mutual comfort; bear with each other's weaknesses, support each other's infirmities, and may temporal and eternal felicity await you."

Jessica knelt at his feet, whilst he breathed forth his wishes for their happiness, and Mr. Hanbury, rising her, presented her to Valdesa.

"To your care," he continued, "do I consign a sacred trust, bequeathed to me in the last moments of a dying friend; bound to his memory by the ties of gratitude, the welfare of his child is nearer to my heart, than any earthly object; cherish her faithfully; love her tenderly; and continue to be worthy of the confidence reposed in you.

"Your wife merits your affection, for she is amiable; and whilst you love her, will deem no sacrifice too much for your sake: but beware, Valdesa, I know the heart of Jessica, and I also know, that it is tremblingly alive to the slightest appearance of neglect.

" She will not complain if she perceives any abatement of affection, but she will sorrow in secret; endeavour then to deserve her love, to preserve her happiness, and, oh! may love and happiness be your portion."

Valdesa assured Mr. Hanbury, that he was fully sensible of the value of that charge, which he had honoured him with and hoped that he should never, on any occasion, prove unmindful of his trust.

CHAPTER XXII.

Yet oh, thy living features never wore
A look so sweet, so eloquent before,
As this which bids all human passions cease,
And tells my pitying heart thou died in peace.
BOWLES.

THE comfort of Jessica, like every other human possession, was of short duration. One evening, on returning from a walk with her husband, she perceived the house in much confusion, the servants in great distress; alarmed at this apparent hurry, she hastily enquired the cause, when one of the servants abruptly informed her that Mr. Hanbury was dying.

She ran to his apartment, and kneeling beside the bed, wildly called on him to

speak to her; he made a vain effort to raise his head from the pillow, and clasping her hand within his, she found that he was unable to articulate.

By this time Valdesa had entered the room, and Jessica requested that he would instantly go in search of the best medical assistance he could find.

In a short time he returned, accompanied by a physician, who, after feeling Mr. Hanbury's pulse, pronounced his disorder to be an attack of paralysis, and after the usual applications administered, left the house with the promise of returning in an hour or two.

He did return, but not to give consolation to the almost breaking heart of Jessica; when he informed her that the situation of Mr. Hanbury was at present such as scarcely to admit of hope; and when followed by Valdesa into another apartment, in which he had requested to speak with him, he assured him, that he believed Mr. Hanbury to be then in a dying state.

Jessica in the mean time was seated at his side, her eyes fondly riveted on his emaciated form, whilst the tears flowed from them, and dropped on the pillow, over which she was leaning, as watching the slightest motion of her friend; she dared hardly breath, for fear of discomposing him.

The long dreaded hour was hastening fast, in which he was to be torn from her: when a life of anxiety, disappointment, and suffering was to terminate.

He slept calmly for some hours, and Valdesa took his station with Jessica, at the side of the bed. The fluttering pulse, and languid respiration, however, prepared them for the change; and about seven o'clock, supported in the arms of Jessica, after making a sign to embrace her, he breathed his last.

Thus ended the eventful career of one who, born to dignify and adorn the human race, fell a sacrifice to the perfidy and ingratitude of his fellow creatures.

Mr. Hanbury's life had been one series of trials and afflictions, the hour of repose had at length arrived.

As after a day in which the sun has shed upon the earth it's brilliant rays, and exhausted it's heat, it sinks to rest in evening's tranquil hours; so his virtues, diffusing their lustre around, and imparting warmth by their beams, reposed in death after the fatigue and struggle of a long day.

Valdesa found it necessary to use every argument that reason could suggest to calm the mind of Jessica; but the hour of recent calamity is not that for availing condolence: religion alone was to teach her resignation, and time to blunt the arrow which would still rankle in the wound.

Jessica prepared herself for the sad indulgence of taking her last farewell of the lifeless form of her departed friend; and assuming all the fortitude of which she was possessed, the evening after his

decease, she repaired to the chamber of death; after dismissing the attendants, calmly kneeling by the couch, on which that form so fondly loved was stretched, she prayed for resignation to support his loss.

As she gazed on his pale countenance reposing in death, she thought of the virtues which had shone so conspicuous there, and her tears flowed at the recollection.

That eye, beaming sensibility and benevolence, for ever closed; those lips, which had charmed her imagination and improved her heart by the precepts of truth, for ever silent; that voice, whose accents, mildly sweet, had consoled and cheered her spirits when drooping under the pressure of sickness or of sorrow, hushed in the stillness and gloom of death!

It was the hour of evening, and the sun's last rays were partially shed over the couch, as they beamed through the

window near which it was placed. Struck with the reflection that before another sun she should cease to gaze at that form, that nothing would be left but the fond remembrance of his virtues, Jessica burst into fresh transports of grief.

" Yet he will live in my heart," she exclaimed, " and there be cherished till with him I repose in the grave. Yes, dear and honoured friend, in life beloved, in death lamented; should thy pure spirit, hovering over me in this hour sacred to thy memory, witness the sorrows of my heart, it would be soothed by my resignation to the will of an unerring Being, and never shall my life be stained with any action that would have pained thy pure and gentle bosom: blest be thy precepts, and thy memory hallowed! and oh, may we soon be reunited never more to experience separation."

Jessica rose, she lingered, she kissed his pale cheek, and bathing it with her tears, tore herself from the apartment.

She returned to Valdesa calm and resigned, her mind more tranquilized since she had paid her visit to the remains of her beloved friend: but he had left a void in her heart, which could never, perhaps, in this life be supplied.

CHAPTER XXIII.

There is a calm for those that weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found,
They softly lie, and sweetly sleep,
Low in the ground.

MONTGOMERY.

IN the evening of the fifth day after Mr. Hanbury's decease, the last obsequies were performed, and accompanied by Valdesa, the physician, and an old servant, Jessica attended Mr. Hanbury to the grave.

This was a trial under which even her fortitude, which seldom forsook her was completely shaken.

As she leaned on the arm of her husband whilst the solemn rites of sepulture were performed, and saw her dearest

friend consigned to the dark and silent tomb, the remembrance of her father rushed on her imagination united with that of him, for whom she was now sorrowing: riveted together by the ties of sympathy, in the bonds of friendship, which during their lives had known no diminution, they were now to be reunited where their mutual sorrows would be remembered no more.

At Mr. Hanbury's particular request, his remains were deposited in a burying ground which he had selected in a walk with Jessica, desiring that if his decease should happen during their abode in that neighbourhood, he might be interred there.

It was indeed a fit sanctuary for those who were quietly reposing after the storms of life; and the heart which was aching under a sense of unmerited injuries, might have longed to bury it's sorrows amongst those calm shades.

The hour was come, "when all the air

a solemn stillness holds," and the gloom of twilight enveloped the surrounding objects; no sound interrupted the melancholy reflections of Jessica, as mournfully and slowly she returned to their now comfortless habitation; no friend there to extend in kindness his hand, and greet with smiles of welcome her return!

In the affectionate attentions of Valdesa, however, the wounded mind of Jessica was in some degree restored, and the morning after that melancholy scene, in compliance with her desire, he wrote to Charles, informing him of his union with Jessica, and the death of their mutual friend.

For this was a task to which Jessica found herself wholly unequal; she could not address her brother in the language of affection, when the recollection of the many hours of fruitless anxiety which he had caused to Mr. Hanbury, obtruded itself on her mind, and uncertain as she

was whether the letter might ever reach him, Valdesa was almost discouraged in the undertaking.

The pacquet was however addressed to a gentleman in London to whom Mr. Hanbury had consigned Charles's affairs previous to his leaving England.

Jessica found the last testimony of her friend's regard for her when, on searching his papers, she discovered that he had left to her his library, plate, and furniture.

The trifling estate of which he was possessed was, independent of his church preferment, the whole of his property, and had on his death devolved to a stranger.

This mark of his regard was however more prized by Jessica than the acquisition of riches would have been; it convinced her that she was beloved by him, and was a consolation to her under her sorrows; and Valdesa, though not in circumstances at all equal to his

rank, had yet sufficient for the comforts of life.

To all else Jessica was indifferent; " content and careless of to-morrow's fare," her wants were moderate, her wishes circumscribed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Whilst I am bound to wonder
I am bound to sorrow too.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Conte Valdesa was yet living, though from the period of his mother's death Valdesa and he had never met.

The bonds of consanguinity, dear as they ought to be to us, and necessary as they are to the well-being of society, circumstances sometimes dissolve, and justify the individual in the dissolution.

Thus was it in the present instance: the conduct of the Conte towards his unfortunate wife, which had proved one

series of tyranny and oppression, and finally terminated her life, had not only severed from him the affections of his son, but had excited sensations in the mind of Valdesa nearly amounting to abhorrence; and he had quitted Naples with the unalterable determination of returning to it no more.

The Conte, however, had soon after the death of the Contessa, formed a connection with a woman unamiable and unprincipled as himself, and whose children would in all probability inherit the fortune which in justice Valdesa ought to have possessed.

The Signor Valdesa's maternal grandfather had been swept away by a malignant fever soon after the death of his daughter; and died, as the Marquis predicted, a prey to misery and remorse.

He beheld his child sacrificed, he saw her uncomplaining bow beneath the yoke, he felt that though surrounded

by splendour she was wretched, that though married she had no husband.

Conviction flashed on his mind with all its horrors, for he was sensible of these evils when too late, and conscience told him that he was the author of them all.

He watched the faded form of the Contessa sinking into the grave, and each time that he visited her, it seemed to speak daggers to his heart.

No reproaches escaped her, her looks were those of gentleness and love, yet the anguish of her mind was depicted in her countenance as she looked forward to her approaching dissolution.

The hour at length arrived, and as the weary mariner returning from a foreign land, hails with peaceful sensations his native shore, so she viewed the asylum of rest which she had been long and anxiously anticipating.

From Valdesa Jessica was fully acquainted with the sufferings of the

Contessa, as he had given to her a more succinct account than that which he had imparted to Mr. Hanbury; for there were traits in the character of his father, too terrible to be revealed to one who was so deeply interested in the fate of his mother, as Mr. Hanbury was supposed to be.

Valdesa had a sister innocent and beautiful, the consolation of her mother, too great a consolation for the Conte to permit her the enjoyment of: at twelve years of age he tore her from her, and sent her to an old villa of his, in the neighbourhood of Naples, where, disguised as a peasant, did her brother sometimes visit her, for this privilege in his own character was denied to him.

Excluded from the world, and immured in a habitation far from the busy haunts of men, did this lovely flower blush unseen and droop beneath the chilling gale of adversity; her mind

enervated by sorrow, her health destroyed with anxiety; casting wistful glances towards the abode of her mother, whom she never more expected to behold.

At length Valdesa was under the necessity of quitting Naples, the regiment in which he was then an officer was ordered abroad, and his sister's shadow of comfort departed with him.

Emilie saw herself condemned to perpetual imprisonment, doomed to captivity by the barbarity of a father, and this to gratify his desire of revenge, because he supposed he possessed not the affections of his wife.

Thus to indulge his malignant passions did the Conte sacrifice two beings whom he was bound to cherish and protect.

Emilie parted from Valdesa, and they met no more;—his regiment was ordered abroad, where it continued some years, and during that period intelligence reached him of Emilie's death;

as soon as he returned to Italy, he hastened to his mother, whom he found bending beneath a weight of anguish.

She had never been permitted to see her daughter from the time of his departure, and that circumstance seemed to have added the last death stroke to her peace.

Valdesa visited the villa, where all was gloom and desolation. No kind and gentle Emilie to wander with him through those pleasant shades, where together they had beguiled so many hours.

An old woman whom he found in the villa, who had been placed there to keep it aired, informed him where he might meet with the housekeeper that had formerly resided there, and who now lived not far from thence.

The evening was closing, but impatient to hear a more particular account of the death of his poor sister, than he could collect from this woman,

Valdesa proceeded to Agnes's habitation.

Years and anxiety had so much altered him, that old Agnes could hardly recognize her young master in the person before her; but when assured it was indeed himself, she overwhelmed him with caresses.

When Valdesa entered upon the subject of his visit, she sorrowfully shook her head, "Ah! your poor dear sister is indeed gone," said she, "and old and miserable as I am, I am yet here."

"We have had sad doings, my dear young master, at the villa since you left us, your sister never held up her head after you went, she gave up her long walks, and seldom went beyond the old bridge, and then I used to talk to her and encourage her, but the tears would run down her face, and she would try to smile when I mentioned your return.

"But there are strange stories," said

she, lowering her voice, "and I do not know whether I should mention all that I have heard.

"There came to the villa, with the Conte your father, two gentlemen, one was I think a Marchese, but I have forgot his name, and the other a beautiful young gentleman, who used to walk about with your sister, and always seemed so happy when he was here."

"Well, it was said that the Conte wished to marry your sister to this Marchese, but he seemed far too old for her, and she used to sit down and weep so when they were coming, that it used almost to break my heart to look at her.

"At last the young gentleman ceased to come with the Marchese, and then she seemed more unhappy."

"She would walk alone, and then sit down and used to sigh so pitifully, and when I asked what I could do for her, she would lay her hand on her heart

and burst into tears, and would then go away without ever speaking.

" Many's the tear that poor old Agnes has shed since you went away.

" I used to think when my dear young master returned, there will be an end of these troubles, but you will think I am very tedious and never mean to finish my story.

" Well then, it was last winter that your sister drooped sadly, and your father often came here with the Marchese; and every time after they were gone she seemed more unhappy; it was just about Christmas time, and I went to see my son, who lives four leagues from Naples.

" The night before I was to set off I went up to the Signora's door, and rapping, she bid me come in, and I told her I was leaving the villa for a few days, and asked her if she wanted me for any thing, " Ah no, my dear Agnes, she said, " I hope you will be very

happy in the sight of your children, and do not hurry yourself, but stay and enjoy yourself amongst them, and putting a purse into my hand, she shook hands with me so kindly, and looked so sorrowfully, that my heart was quite full.

" Well, the next morning I left the chateau; my son was taken ill, and I was obliged to stay with him some weeks, but I heard accounts that the Signora was dead, and some persons said that she had left the villa: however I was so unhappy that I told my son the day after, that I must leave him, and when I got here, I found all quite deserted; at last when I got admittance there was the old woman that you saw there now, and she mentioned that the Conte was gone away, and that she had come to the villa to take care of it; that it was rumoured that the Signora was dead, but strange ac-

counts, my dear Signor, have been rumoured since then.

The Contessa was then very ill in a fever, and they did not tell her of your sister's death till a long time after, but many persons say that the Conte has taken her away from the villa, and has told his family that she is dead.

The servants that he left there are both gone, and no one knows whither, and it is also said that the Conte wished to force her into a marriage with the Marchese, and that she refused; and that he carried her away on that account; however, I am certain she loved that fine young gentleman that used to come, for she took it to heart ever after he went away.

"And now I have got to the end of my sad story," added the poor old woman, "and you see me, my young master, older with grief than years.

"When I sit and think of your good sister, so kind and so patient, and how

unhappy she was, and all the tears she shed, well then I am quite tired of the world and I long to rest with her.

" But you must not look so sorrowful, my dear young master, for it was the will of God."

CHAPTER XXV.

Oh God, such strains breath'd by my angel guide,
Would make me pass the cup of anguish by;
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had died.

ANON.

VALDESA had listened to the simple, but feeling narrative of the faithful old Agnes, with the bitterest sensation.

At one moment he indulged a hope that Emilie yet existed, and that he should discover her abode; and at another he sunk into despair; he well knew the tendency of the lower order of people to an indulgence of superstition, and their fondness for every thing mysterious and marvellous, yet the whole of the story struck him in so powerful a manner, though he scarcely knew why, that

if he had been apt to harbour presentiments, he would, in despite of reason, have yielded to a foreboding that Emilie still lived.

But why should the Conte, who could have had any command executed, from the unlimited power that his wealth gave him over his domestics, and of whom Emilie was in too much fear to make any open resistance, why should he have had recourse to stratagem to effect his purposes? besides, had not Agnes informed him that the health of Emilie had been long declining?

Valdesa dismissed the first idea as absurd, but yet doubts would obtrude, and his mind was racked by the various conjectures that took place of each other there; afflicted and harrassed, he returned to the villa, and found the old woman awaiting his appearance.

As she led him through a long suite of rooms, before they arrived at the apartment which was allotted him, a

kind of superstitious awe, to which he had been unaccustomed, came over him as he traversed the long galleries, from which no sound proceeded, save the echo of his footsteps.

Dismissing his attendant at the door, Valdesa placed the lamp on a dressing table, and sat down, ruminating on the events of the evening,

The recollection of the last interview which he had with his sister, the night preceding his departure, darted on his mind, and the conversation which had then passed now recurred with peculiar force.

As they were walking in the avenues of the villa, and speaking of the many u forseen circumstances which might happen during the melancholy period of a long separation, and even the possibility that they might never meet more in this world, the state of the spirit, after its flight from its material tenement, was adverted to.

"That is a subject," said Valdesa to Emilie, "which has frequently occupied my thoughts, whether after our departure from this "narrow bourn," the spirit is permitted to revisit the earth; to me, I confess, the idea of being allowed to hover over the forms of those whom in life I had loved, would be soothing and consolatory, and, if possible, to have the power of imparting to them my feelings and situation, and as much of that hereafter, as might come within the limits of my knowledge."

"Yet," said Emilie, "were this privilege granted us, what would be the sufferings of those most dear to us, were it revealed to them that we were in misery? However, if it will afford you the least satisfaction, be assured, Valdesa, that should my passage from this to another state of being arrive, ere we again meet, and it is in my power to grant you this indulgence, I will impart to you all that I am enabled, of "the

secrets of the prison house," and the same promise I exact from you."

After the death of Emilie, this interesting conversation had often recurred to the mind of Valdesa, but perhaps he now dwelt on it more intently from having returned to the abode once occupied by her; and being in the same apartments where she used to repose, he threw a transient glance around the chamber, as he slowly prepared to take off some part of his dress; he arose, then sat down; but condemning this weakness, he roused himself, and made an effort to compose his mind, which was suffering from mingled sensations of grief, regret, and awe.

"Dear and gentle Emilie," he exclaimed, "I can have no doubt of the felicity which thy pure spirit must enjoy, after bursting the bonds which chained thee to this world.

"Thy path through life, though short, was rugged; no sweets arose to beguile

thee on thy passage, but thou reposest in the grave, over which the loud storm rends its fury but in vain; where the agitations of thy heart have subsided, and where no tyranny can reach to oppress thee."

After offering up his prayers to the Protector of All, his mind more composed, Valdesa retired to bed; he sunk into a tranquil slumber, till awoke by sounds so sweet as to resemble the voices of the heavenly choir; now dying away on his ear, then swelling into full melodious strains.

His curtains were suddenly undrawn, and the form of his beloved Emilie, her countenance irradiated by angelic brightness, was before him.

Valdesa started from his pillow; she waved her hand: "I am come," she said, "to perform the promise which I made to you whilst on earth. What is it of futurity which you desire to know?"

"Is there," said Valdesa, "a state of punishment and of reward?"

"There are both."

"Are you happy?"

"Of this I am not permitted to speak. Are there any other doubts which you are anxious to unravel?"

"The moments are precious, and I must be brief."

"I have no other," Valdesa replied, in trembling agitation, and instantly the figure disappeared.

He sprang from the bed, and throwing open the window, rested upon it.

The moon was shedding her wan beams, and their light was partially diffused across the apartment: the wind in low murmurs whistled through the avenue, as the breezes shook the branches of the trees, which waved their tall heads near the casement from which Valdesa leaned, lost in reflection on this awful midnight visitation.

It was in that avenue where he had

last beheld his sister, whilst an inhabitant of the earth. Since the night in which this conversation took place, five years had elapsed. What had been the fate of poor Emilie? had she fallen a victim to the revengeful spirit of the Conte, or had she died the martyr of disastrous love?

These were the thoughts that arose in Valdesa's mind, whilst, with his eyes fixed on that part of the avenue in which he had taken a last leave of her, he imagined that he again beheld her celestial form, floating on the breeze.

He paced to and fro, with agitated step, the apartment; at length exhausted, he threw himself on the couch; he fell into a tranquil slumber, and on awaking, found that the whole of this scene was but a dream, a vision of the night, yet the impression which it had left on his mind he could not easily shake off.

After dressing himself, and descend-

ing the staircase, Valdesa threw open the door of the saloon, and wandered through the grounds to calm his agitated spirits.

It was that sweet season of the year when nature is gradually unfolding her charms; every object around seemed springing to life and vigour, but Valdesa thought of the lovely flower which he had left, when last amongst those scenes, in the bloom of innocence and beauty, now cropt by the relentless hand of death.

"Another, and another spring," said he, "will appear; these beauties will again expand; but thine, my poor Emilie, are faded, to revive no more! Abhorred be the ruthless being who despoiled thee of thy peace, and laid those beauties low! but, oh, if thou yet livest, may it be mine to watch over thee, and guard thy footsteps with fond and zealous care."

Valdesa dismissed the last idea, how-

ever, as the suggestion of hope, unfounded in reason; and in gloomy sadness returned to the villa, where he past one day.

After taking an affectionate leave of poor old Agnes, Valdesa set out for Naples; on his arrival there, he found the Contessa in a state of yet greater weakness than when he parted from her. Of her daughter she could seldom bear to speak.

Valdesa knew that she was impressed with the idea of Emilie's having fallen a prey to the effects of consumption, and it would have been cruel to have raised a doubt in her mind, yet Valdesa certainly had doubts; something darkly mysterious had appeared in the conversation of Agnes, and he dreaded that the Conte, or his measures, had been in some way accessary to his sister's death.

The attachment of which Agnes had spoken, might have hastened that event;

it was possible that Emilie might have been deceived and deserted by the object of her love, and have thus fallen a victim to his perfidy.

Valdesa was lost in conjectures, which only tended to bewilder his mind and rob him of repose.

The Conte was at this time absent from Naples, or he would have demanded an audience with him, and spoken loudly to his conscience. The Contessa died, and his only comfort fled with her.

Valdesa quitted Naples, and after travelling through various parts of Italy, on his road to visit some of the French provinces where he had never been, he arrived at Montpelier, and chance had there thrown him into the society of Jessica and Mr. Hanbury.

He had long, however, relinquished the hope of ever meeting his sister more, in this life, and had yielded to the idea

of her death, as the most consoling which could present itself.

He knew that her existence, did she yet live, must be fraught with misery, and in imagination resigned her to the peaceful grave.

It was now Valdesa's intention to return with Jessica to England; it was not material to him where he resided.

Her choice, of course, rested there; but mingled, and sometimes bitter, were the sensations with which she contemplated her return to that country; her dearest friend no longer its inhabitant, it had lost to her its greatest charm; but she checked those repining thoughts, when she reflected that he reposed in peace; and consoled herself with that idea which too seldom occurs, when we most need its truth, that all things are for the best.

And as Jessica was not thrown on the world without a protector, she had yet much to be grateful for.

She had not entered into her present situation with those sanguine views so apt to beguile a youthful mind, and pave the way to disappointment; not with romantic hopes, but the sober solid wish of rational comfort.

To those who are prepared for, and are expecting all sunshine around, every trifling disappointment is present misery; and in each situation of this mutable life, we must suffer from the indulgence of unreasonable expectations.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Stately vests,
Rich viands, and the pleasurable wine,
Were your's unearn'd by toil, nor could you see
The unenjoying toil as misery.

CHARLES had accepted of lady Selwyn's invitation to join her party, and they had arrived at Nice, where they found a number of persons from their own and other countries: some in quest of health, some in the pursuit of pleasure, and many, like themselves, seeking to drown reflection, and kill time.

They had here their faro parties, their midnight revels, and all the accompaniments of a life of determined dissipation.

In the morning, pale, emaciated, and

languid, would the old and the young alike crawl forth, courting those friendly breezes, which were to "bring back feeble life's exhausted tide." In the evening, the thoughtless and the gay would croud together to spend the time, and pass away a life that appeared too long.

Gaming was the fashion at Nice, as well as in England, and Charles found himself yet more a novice in the art than when in his own country; and his resources were to spring from a quarter on which there was not the least dependence, a woman of intrigue.

But he had now other pursuits than gaming in view; that darling passion had for a short time yielded to one still more vicious and unprincipled.

Lady Selwyn had taken with her abroad an orphan niece of her's, whose father, falling in his country's service, had left her unprotected, for lady Selwyn was not the person to whose care he would have committed her.

Louisa was young, innocent, and beautiful, but thrown into a situation the most unfortunate in which innocence and beauty could be placed, for she was poor.

Charles had felt himself much fascinated with her before this voyage; but lady Selwyn, who rested confident in her own powers, never for one moment supposed that he had any other object than her own society in view.

That was only the ostensible motive by which Charles had been actuated, the real one was centered in the charms of her niece.

He paid to her ladyship the most flattering attentions in public; for Louisa he reserved those marks of his attachment which were unwitnessed by the persons round. Young as she was, Louisa was not devoid of reflection, and this circumstance often both pained and surprised her.

" If Mr. Greville be really sincere,"

she would say, " why neglect and avoid me in the presence of my aunt? and why lavish those attentions on me only when alone?" yet she loved, and loving, could not doubt.

It is the surest proof of a guileless heart, a mind unhackneyed in deception, to believe human nature to be what it ought to be: it is only when the veil is rent aside, and we discover the reality of the picture, that we view it as it is; painful and humiliating discovery!

Long Louisa trusted, and long she was deceived; Charles Greville had never thought of her as his wife: he saw she was too virtuous to become his mistress.

She was assailed by every method that human ingenuity, employed in a bad couse, could effect.

Charles beheld himself foiled, his triumph over innocence incomplete, and he retired in disgrace from the field, leaving poor Louisa a prey to misery, on

discovering the unworthiness of an object in whom she had implicitly confided.

Lady Selwyn witnessed the unhappiness of her niece, laughed at her credulity, and the young man was restored to her good graces. Her ladyship's countenance and support were indeed necessary to prop his sinking credit; not that he had a spark of any thing bordering on affection for her; the compact in the first instance was formed from motives the most despicable, and, from the continuance of these motives, it remained unbroken.

Had Charles met with any plan more agreable, or more convenient than a longer residence with lady Selwyn's party, he would have quitted her with the same sang froid as he had abandoned her niece.

How rapid is the progress from indiscretion to vice! Charles had once only been indiscreet, he had since be-

come depraved, and perhaps, had a character exactly similar to his own been pointed out to him, as that which he would one day resemble, he would have shrunk with anger and contempt from the comparison, and, in the indignant language of Hagael, might have exclaimed, "am I a dog that I should do these things!" But he had yielded to his passions in the opening of his career, they had now obtained a complete victory.

His connection, and the nature that of connection, with lady Selwyn had become equally notorious, and yet, though lord Selwyn had witnessed the various improprieties of his wife, he had never, hitherto, for a moment harboured a suspicion of her virtue.

In the higher ranks of society such a fatal latitude is given for imprudence, that the number of misguided and miserable females cannot be wondered at. The pursuits and amusements of

married people are so different from what they ought to be, and their dislike to associate with each other, through the prevalence of fashion, such, that the many divorces which we now hear of, a circumstance equally lamentable and disgraceful, is not a matter to create surprise.

Lord Selwyn had married her ladyship, because he was advised to take a wife, and too indolent to bestow much time in choosing one, she was the first very pretty woman that he chanced to meet with; and he married her: roused, however, to a sense of injured honour and offended pride, he now determined to prove her guilt, and separate himself from her.

CHAPTER XXVII.

But ah ! no fond maternal smile,
His unprotected youth enjoy'd,
His limbs inur'd to early toil,
His days with early hardship crown'd.

ROSCOE.

THOUGH Valdesa had once indulged a hope that he might again in this life be united to his sister, and had since dismissed the idea as visionary, and resigned her to the grave, yet Emilie still lived.

Three leagues from Montmoriano, in the castle of Archelino, was this poor unfortunate entombed, dead to the world, and shut out alike from the voice of kindness and compassion. The Conte

Valdesa had promised the hand of his daughter in marriage to the Marchese Chiaramonti, a man whom he was bound to by the league of villainy: each was dependent on the other, for both had committed atrocities that none now were privy to.

The grave is the safest repository of secrets, and there was no one left alive to tell the tale.

Emilie had, however, long resisted this act of tyranny; she saw herself unhappy, but was supported by the consciousness of not deserving such a fate. To have loved the Marchese Chiaramonti was impossible; for he was selfish, proud and unprincipled: on these considerations alone Emilie refused to unite herself to him, but there was yet another, though not a more powerful motive, to guide her conduct.

The Marchese had brought with him to the villa a young man, the orphan son of a brother, for whom Emilie, from

a variety of causes, had conceived a strong affection. She fancied that he resembled Valdesa; that circumstance was sufficient to excite her admiration; but the Chevalier saw and pitied her situation, and the attention which he shewed to her awakened her gratitude and esteem.

He came to the villa, his mind prejudiced against Emilie, for he had been given to understand that the Marchese was the object of her affections.

He was soon, however, undeceived in this idea, and felt it but an act of justice to atone, by every kind attention in his power, for the false supposition he had harboured.

Pity is near akin to love in some minds, and a mind of that description was the Chevalier's. Having paid one visit to the villa, another succeeded, and, unconscious of his attachment to the Signora, it had sunk deep ere he imagined it had penetrated the surface.

" Emilie must not marry the Marchese," would the Chevalier often say, as ruminating on the possibility of such an event, "no, the Signora must never be his wife, she would be wretched in such a situation; but how am I to prevent it? and why, if she consents, should I interfere? of what moment can it be to me? I shall leave Italy to return to it no more, I must go back to Switzerland, to my native mountains, and never again behold her; but yet," pausing, " is not the happiness or misery of any fellow creature of the greatest moment, and that of a woman, an amiable woman? no, she shall not be so sacrificed."

One evening, whilst meditating on this subject, as rambling alone through the grounds of the Conte, on suddenly striking into a different path, the Chevalier saw Emilie approaching; conscious of the reflections which had occupied his mind for nearly the last hour, he did not address her with his usual ease.

" Methinks the air around Naples, has infected you with gloom," said Emilie, " or perhaps, if it is contagious, you have caught it in the society at the villa." " No," replied he, " I have been dwelling very intently on a serious subject, and if the Signora would forgive my presumption, I feel a strong inclination to make her a party in my thoughts.".

" You, I am certain," said Emilie, " would indulge in no ruminations that were not proper to make your friends acquainted with, and you have certainly my permission to speak on."

" I know not, however," interrupted the Chevalier, " whether I am warranted in the liberty I am about to take with you, but it proceeds from a regard to your happiness, and without that plea would be indeed inexcusable.

" You are not, I suppose, unacquainted with the circumstance of my having been already made privy to the Marchese's

passion for you, and the honour which I understand is at present designed for him; may I then ask you one question, are you thoroughly acquainted with the character of the Marchese?"

"Of the character of the Marchese your uncle," replied Emilie, "I know nothing, except that he is the associate of my father."

The words uncle and father, joined in the last sentence, seemed to imply some reflection on the former, and the Chevalier hesitated, in doubt whether to proceed.

At length, after some pause, he said, "forgive me, I see that my zeal for your welfare has offended you, and I will mention the subject no more." "Far from it," replied Emilie, "I assure you that I receive it from you as a mark of your kindness, and I am grateful for it."

"I know not," said the Chevalier, "whether it may not be thought that, like the viper, I am stinging the hand

that fosters me; but I feel that your happiness is dearer to me than my own reputation, and I cannot see it sacrificed. In few words then, the Signora Valdesa must never unite herself with the Marchese, if she values her own peace, for he is proud, tyrannical and revengeful! but more than these, he is a man of intrigue, incapable of solid or lasting affection. In a few months you would be resigned for some other object of his passion, and your mind would sink under the miseries of such a fate.

"Be firm, then, in your resistance, and remember that the hour in which you consent to unite yourself with the Marchese is that in which your misery is sealed."

Emilie assured the Chevalier that she had never harboured any intention of such an act, that she felt no affection towards the Marchese, and, in the absence of that sentiment, should certainly not think of uniting herself to him.

Emilie did not prolong her walk; the conversation terminated here, and on her return to the villa she retired to her own apartment, where alone she ruminated on the late interview with the Chevalier. Emilie had previously determined that no human consideration should lead her to accept the Marchese's hand; thus warned, and by one who could have no sinister designs in view, she became still more firmly fixed in her intentions.

It never occurred to the mind of Emilie, that the Chevalier himself had formed an attachment to her; and yet, though, this conjecture would have been the true one. The Chevalier's conduct had not proceeded from interested views, for though he loved Emilie, he despaired of ever being able to call her his, and for that reason had concealed most sedulously his attachment.

Nor would he, if the Marchese had

been worthy of her, have conceived a plan so ungenerous as that of separating him from her; but he knew that it was otherwise, and it was justice that prompted the deed.

The Conte was urgent with his daughter, the Marchese became impatient, and each day the Signora's unhappiness increased.

Firm, however, in the line of conduct which she had marked out for herself, she never, by any word or action, led the Marchese to suppose that she meant to be his; and, when one morning, after he, with the Chevalier, had quitted the villa, the Conte demanded that she should affix some period in which the suspence of the former was to be terminated, Emilie calmly replied, that as she had never awakened hope, suspence could not have been excited; that she had been uniform in her declarations that she had no intentions of marrying the Marchese, and her conduct towards

him had corresponded with those senti ments.

The Conte was astonished at the firmness of his daughter's reply, but that did not shake his resolution; he was predetermined, and principle never weighed with him, where passion or interest interfered.

He quitted her, but it was with a resolution that his plans should be carried into effect.

His operations, though slow, the Conte conceived would be certain. He now apprehended that Emilie had some more powerful stimulus than he had before imagined; some adviser on the subject, or some object in view, which gave courage to her resistance, and his thoughts glanced towards the Chevalier.

On the Marchese's next visit to the villa, the Conte mentioned to him his suspicions: "I cannot," said the Marchese, "entirely enter into your surmises, do you suppose that your

daughter would listen to the suggestions of a foolish boy? But this can be easily obviated, the Chevalier shall visit the villa no more. I have been long trifled with, and something decisive must be done"

The Conte saw that the pride of the Marchese was piqued, and his temper irritated by his surmise respecting the Chevalier.

The Marchese was too fully conscious how much he was in that young man's power, how many tales he could unfold which must stamp him with odium in the mind of Emilie; he rose, he walked to the window, then sat down again in suppressed rage; and complaining of the heat, in a few minutes he abrubtly quitted the apartment, suffering the conflict of those various passions which actuate the heart of a bad man.

"Sincerity, thou first of virtues, let no mortal ever leave thy onward path."

The Marchese had strayed from the fair and open path of that high-souled virtue, and every step seemed to involve him yet more deeply in his own snares.

The Conte, meanwhile, had retired in no less agitation, deliberating on what was to be done; he had yet sufficient humanity to shrink from the idea of using violence in the execution of their plans, and yet he knew too well the firmness of his daughter's mind to hope to effect the present purpose by any gentler methods.

Emilie had been educated in the best of all schools, the school of adversity; immured from the world, her principles had been formed in solitude, they were those the nearest to nature in which sophistry had no share; they had hitherto proved the test of truth, and on these she formed her plan of action. Her heart told her, that to unite herself with the Marchese would be to barter honour aad conscience, and she was un-

alterably fixed never to consent to such an union.

In the evening the Marchese visited Emilie, and she candidly declared to him her intention.

"My life," said she, "has proved a succession of trials, but amidst them all I am proud to say, that I never lost sight of what I conceived to be the path of rectitude: where I have erred, I trust my want of judgment, not of principle, hath been the occasion. I have seen one sorrowful instance, which, from my near connection to the innocent sufferer, hath embittered my past life, of the misery that arises from an union where affection and esteem were not the leading motives. With this instance before my eyes, and with this conviction on my mind, I should deserve, in accepting your hand, the unhappiness which would await me. It is true, I am far from happy, but, sup-

ported by conscious innocence, I cannot be miserable.

"Torn from my mother at an age when I most required her guidance, I was brought here, left to myself, with no views in life to turn the current of my thoughts. I have had ample room for reflection, my principles have been formed in solitude, and to that reflection which gave birth to them I am indebted for the little comfort I enjoy. Do not then, I beseech you, rob me of that comfort; I do not wish to go beyond these walls. I have read that beautiful production of English genius, the Prince of Abysinia; I have contemplated his character; this has taught me the vanity of human wishes, and that to be content with what the present hour affords, to look not further is the most simple road to happiness; leave me then to the little share of tranquility which I now possess. I am not fitted to shine in courts; a few months reflection would

convince you of the error of your choice; many women are there, I doubt not, in the gay world, who would render you happy, and partake of your happiness. With me it is not, never can be the case; I am grateful for your predilection in my favour, but gratitude is all that I can render you."

The Marchese was astonished to hear sentiments like these from a girl of eighteen. He had been accustomed to the society of women so far inferior to Emilie, that, for the first time, he felt respect mingle with his admiration, and was wholly unequal to combat a resolution so firmly rivetted as Emilie's appeared to be.

She arose, the Marchese suffered her to pass without any interruption; she left the room. It was, however, but a momentary victory, which prepared the way to sad defeat.

The passions of the Marchese this conversation had roused, and all his dor-

mant rancour was called forth. He conceived it impossible, judging from his own character, that Emilie could be acting solely from principle, and some latent affection for the Chevalier, notwithstanding the wound which this conjecture gave to his pride, he believed was the cause of her resistance.

After seeking out the Conte, the Marchese mentioned to him the late interview with his daughter; "Be appeased," said the Conte, "I beseech you, she shall yet be your's." "Never," replied the Marchese, "whilst she remains at the villa; here she feels herself encouraged in her resolutions; in a short time she flatters herself that her brother will arrive, and is supported by the idea of her security; rob her of that, and you will find that the Signora's sentiments will change, and that she will consent to become my wife. Why go on using arguments and entreaties, in lieu of commands? the former she will always

find words to combat; the latter she cannot resist. Your promise has passed that your daughter shall be the Marchesi Chiaramonte, and that promise I shall not suffer you to revoke.

"Three leagues from Montmoriano you will recollect is the castle of Archelino." The Conte involuntarily shuddered. "I have not lately," continued the Marchese, "been there, but some of my domestics inhabit it at present.

"There the Signora might comfortably reside; and when confined within its walls, be brought to a sense of her duty."

The Conte raised his eyes towards the Marchese, and paused for a reply.

"You know well," said the Marchese, "the conditions, on those I expect compliance; relinquish them, and I resign your daughter."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not.

WORDSWORTH'S POEMS.

THE next morning the Marchese left the villa. The Conte demanded an audience of the Signora, and ordered her to prepare for her departure.

"Every method," said he, "has already been used, which argument or intreaty could suggest; before another sun you will find yourself far removed from home; and may then, perhaps, mourn your present folly."

"If," said Emilie, "my removal from the villa is meant to accelerate the

plan of the Marchese, he will find that it is a vain attempt; fear will never prompt me to a concurrence which principle forbids.

" It must be an alteration of sentiment, not a change of place, that can favour his designs."

The Conte again commanded her to get ready for her departure, and Emilie calmly and patiently withdrew.

When left alone, she cooly meditated on her situation: " I have been a prisoner all my life," said she, " from my earliest recollection I have never tasted the enjoyment of liberty, yet that life has glided peacefully along, and I may have been shielded from many miseries, which those indure who mix with the world.

" The choice is before me; by prostituting those notions of virtue which I have formed, I may mingle with it, and, like the rest of my fellow creatures, encounter its pleasures and its pains;

but is it worth the sacrifice? and can I suppose that a poor individual, like myself, could benefit society by mingling with it? No, I do not hesitate; my father may confine me, and the Marchese may triumph in my fate; but they shall find that I can rise superior to these evils.

"But what is become of the Chevalier? He no longer visits at the villa; I fear his zeal in my cause has involved him in difficulties. Amiable young man. Why was I so unfortunate as to awaken his interest?"

At this moment old Agnes entered the room, and Emilie held the conversation with her that she had alluded to in her account to Valdesa.

After Emilie had separated from her, and recollected that it was possibly for the last time, she felt her spirits unusually depressed; and anxious to shake off the gloom that hung over her, she descended the stair case, and passed

through the hall into the avenue of the villa.

Endeared to Emilie by the powerful ties of custom, were all the objects around, and she felt, in passing each tree or shrub, as if she was taking leave of an old friend; many of them, too, had been planted by her own and the hand of her brother. She had seen them flourish, decay, and awake to life again for seasons past.

"Yes," said she, "you will again rear your heads in youth and beauty, when the hand that planted you is mouldering in the dust. The spring time will again return, but I shall cease to wander in your pleasant shades. Ah! Valdesa, my poor brother, where are you now? perhaps numbered with the slain, or, like your poor Emilie, in sad captivity!"

The thought was too bitter to dwell upon, and she burst into an agony of tears. "Farewel, then," said she, "a

long farewel to those hours that, happy in his society, the only happiness I ever knew, I passed in these wood walks and flowery wilds; we are severed, perhaps, in this life to meet no more; but the fond remembrance of his virtues still supports me."

Of her mother, too, Emilie once thought, but she durst not glance her eye that way.

On returning to the house a figure darted past her, which, in the gloom of twilight, she could not distinguish, and dropping at her feet a paper, disappeared. Emilie secured the paper, and in breathless agitation sat down to peruse it; on it were written these few words, "Be firm, resist, the Marchese has a wife in existence."

She was now completely bewildered; she could not doubt the circumstance of the information having been given her by some friendly hand; perhaps that of the Chevalier. Yet that supposition

was romantic and improbable, for had he been acquainted with such a dreadful obstacle, he would she knew have imparted it to her in a different manner.

The Conte must surely, Emilie thought, be ignorant of that transaction, he could not be villainous enough to wish to unite her where there was such an impediment. Various conjectures arose in the mind of the Signora, but she could come to no definite conclusion.

She once thought of requesting an audience with her father, and shewing him the paper, presented to her in that mysterious manner. Yet Emilie reflected, that from this mode of proceeding she might frustrate the designs of some unknown friend, employed in her cause; though the information might be false, yet who could have an interest in deceiving her; there was something strangely ambiguous in it.

Emilie retired to bed, but not to

sleep, this circumstance having left too powerful an impression on her mind, and at day-break the following morning, accompanied by the Conte, she quitted the villa.

Her journey was commenced under melancholy auspices and fatal forebodings; she believed herself to be a prisoner for life, she knew that she must never more return to the villa; of the place of her destination she had been kept in total ignorance, and travelling before the sun had risen, to discover the surrounding objects, and through a track of country with which she was wholly unacquainted, Emilie had no clue to assist her conjectures.

At length the sun arose, and the surrounding scenery was developed, but it did not serve to throw any light upon the subject. From the rapidity with which they had travelled, the Signora supposed they must be many leagues from the villa. The country around,

as far as she could discern of it, was rich and varied in its scenery, but Emilie's heart was dead to the beauties of nature. Too much occupied in ruminating on her melancholy situation, she only thought of what was next to become of her.

There are seasons in which the mind is in a great degree insensible to outward objects; wrapped up in its own gloom, they lose the power to charm, and thus was it with Emilie. They continued to travel rapidly, and without any cessation, except for a few moments to change horses at three different places on the road. Towards sun-set however they arrived at the place where Emilie found their journey was to terminate.

The castle of Archelino was an ancient gothic structure, which seemed invulnerable to the attacks of the enemy, or the ravages of time: neither, it appeared, had made any depredation, for

its massive walls were in entire repair, and the whole looked fitted for a place of security.

Here then, thought she, am I destined to pass the remainder of my days, and as the Conte handed her from the carriage, and assisted by the servants, conducted Emilie through a long suite of rooms, she found the cold damp strike on her heart.

"This," said the Conte, placing her on a sopha at the end of the room, where they rested, "this castle belongs to the Marchese Chiaramonti, and here he occasionally resides; as his affianced wife you will consider yourself at home, and his domestics at your command.

At the word wife Emilie felt her blood run cold and involuntarily shrunk back; but recovering some firmness, "Why," she said, "did you convey me here with that mistaken notion? I have declared that I never will unite myself with the Marchese; neither time, or my

residence here will prevail with me to change my resolve; let me not then continue at the castle under that idea, but allow me to return to the villa."

"It is time," replied the Conte. "that this foolish resistance should have an end, you must marry the Marchese, and this mode of conduct will be productive of much future misery to yourself."

"The Chevalier, I suppose, has infused notions into your mind prejudicial to his kinsman, has taught you to believe that some unworthiness taints his character; — hypocrite and deceiver! but I advise you to place confidence in a more secure quarter than the opinions of a rash ill-judging young man."

"My opinions," said Emilie, "in general, are of my own forming, and that of the Marchese, in particular, is the result of observation; I needed no insinuations of the Chevalier's to convince me that he is not an object worthy of my

esteem; this his conduct to me, selfish and cruel as it is, has sufficiently evinced."

Refreshments were now brought in, and after supper Emilie rose to retire.

A female servant attended to conduct her to her apartment, in whose countenance she thought she read mingled sensations of surprise and pity.

She staid by the Signora whilst she undressed, and fearing that she would misinterpret her silence, Emilie entered into some conversation with her.

"This seems a spacious building," said she, "if I may judge of the whole by the partial view I have had of it."

"It is a very large one," answered the servant, "and of very little use, for the Marchese seldom comes here. He is here indeed at present, but it is the first time for three years."

With this circumstance Emilie had been unacquainted, her heart sickened at the intelligence, and dismissing the

woman, she sat down on the bed ruminating on her comfortless situation.

Emilie had written frequently to her brother, but was uncertain whether her letters had reached him, she feared they had not; for as she had mentioned the Marchese, and her repugnance to the idea of the projected union, she believed that nothing in that case would have prevented his immediate return to Naples.

Fatigued however by her long journey, Emilie slept soundly, and on joining the Conte she found the Marchese already with him. He arose on her entrance to welcome her, and she very coolly returned his salutation.

After breakfast was finished, and the Conte had withdrawn, Emilie addressed herself to the Marchese on the subject of her having been brought there, expressly contrary to her inclination.

"Suffer me then," said she, "for the last time to appeal to you: I am

brought here without any rational end in view to intimidate me into a promise which I will never render you,—you may imprison me for the remainder of my life, for I have no one to aid my cause, or to prevent it, since he who ought to be my protector joins in the league to destroy me. But I now most solemnly declare, that should I no more pass these walls, I will not consent to be your wife."

"Permit me," said the Marchese, "to assure you that whilst you remain here, every attention shall be shewn to you. I trust however that the period will be short ere you allow me to release you from captivity, and give to society its fairest ornament in the Marchesa Chiaramonti."

"If such," said Emilie, interrupting him, "is to be the alternative, I must die as I have lived, a stranger to the world: and why should I wish to be otherwise, for if all the beings of which

it is composed are selfish and tyrannical, my escape from society is not a misfortune, but a blessing."

In conversations like this was the remaining part of the Marchese's visit to the castle passed; wearied however by the firmness of the Signora's resistance, accompanied by the Conte, he returned to Naples. There the Conte gave it out that his daughter was no more, and dismissed the servants at the villa, to give an air of probability to the report.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Yet oh ! how oft in darkness, and amid
The many shapes of joyless daylight,
When the fretful stir unprofitable,
And the fever of the world have hung
Upon the beatings of my heart,
How often has my spirit turn'd to thee.

WORDSWORTH.

JESSICA still with Valdesa continued at Montpelier, where no tidings of her brother had yet reached her.

She had letters from Mrs. Bamford, mentioning the return of her husband and herself to their native shore, and their wishes to meet their friends again.

With the death of Mr. Hanbury Matilda was yet unacquainted, and Jessica sat down to impart to her that melancholy information.

Time, the powerful alleviate of calamity, which softens the point of sorrow's sharpest sting, had not in the present instance been happily successful.

The affection which Jessica had borne towards Mr. Hanbury seemed interwoven with her existence; his patient unmerited sufferings had so much endeared him to her, that each day added poignancy to her regret.

Jessica's sorrow for her loss she yielded to, rather than attempted to controul; yet it was tempered with resignation.

To amuse her mind, Valdesa prevailed with her to accompany him on a tour through the province of Languedoc. They rested some days near the Bay of Maguelone; a scene presented itself

which was new to Jessica, and her mind was soothed by the beauties around her.

For many months they continued travelling from place to place, and occasionally made pauses where there was any object worthy of their attention.

On their return to Montpelier, Valdesa took Jessica with him to a neighbouring convent, and introduced her to the prioress, with whom he had become acquainted on his first residing there. Jessica found her a very well informed agreeable woman, and received from her a general invitation to the priory.

Though Valdesa was of the church of Rome, Jessica still adhered to her protestant tenets; they were those in which she had been educated, and she wished not to change them, yet *charity*, which tolerates every sect, was the leading principle of her actions. By Mr. Hanbury she had been taught to consider all mankind as her brethren.

No idle controversy on this point clouded the happiness of herself or her husband, each enjoyed their respective opinions.

Though she knew it would have been more congenial to his wishes, had she embraced the faith which he held.

Many months elapsed, and they now began to think of their intended voyage.

From the period of Mr. Hanbury's death Jessica had declined mixing in society, though Valdesa occasionally entered into it. One evening he quitted her to join a party, where he continued until a late hour. In the morning, when Jessica entered into conversation with him, something she imagined had ruffled his mind, and rendered him uneasy.

There was an air of reserve about him, which since their marriage she had seldom observed; and on her addressing Valdesa, he appeared absent and inatten-

tive; she knew not what construction to place on this conduct, and her unhappiness encreased.

In the afternoon as they were sitting together, Jessica absorbed in conjecture on this singular behaviour, Valdesa suddenly broke the silence, by asking her some questions relative to her property.

This was the first time that pecuniary affairs had been adverted to by Valdesa, and as Jessica had candidly opened to him the state of her finances previous to their marriage, she felt hurt at their now being the subject of conversation.

She withdrew to the window, and leaning against it, the tear stole down her cheek.

Could Valdesa be mercenary, could his present gloom arise from such unworthy motives? how strangely then, Jessica thought, she must have mistaken his character.

On turning from the window, she

observed her husband had quitted the room, and seating herself in the chair which he had left, she meditated what plan of conduct to pursue.

Jessica wished much to converse with Valdesa further, and to endeavour to discover the cause of this alteration towards her; she waited for some moments his return, and finding that he still absented himself, she went to his chamber and, gently knocking, he requested her to enter.

Valdesa was seated at a writing desk arranging some papers. There was still the same air of gloom, with something of sadness mingled in the expression of his countenance, and Jessica sadly dispirited, placed herself beside him. "Valdesa," said she, "giving him her hand, is this kind? have you any uneasiness of which you refuse to make me a sharer? It was not in the hour of sunshine alone I promised to participate with you, I thought I was

to be your friend alike in prosperity and adversity. I wish I was more worthy for your sake, and that I had riches to bestow on him who is dearest to my heart, but alas! I am poor, poor in every thing but my affection for you! She paused, and weeping turned away her head.

Valdesa took her hand and drawing her to him, " do not I beseech you," said he, " Jessica, attribute the conversation of to-day to any ungenerous motive; you would do me great injustice in supposing that any such actuated me; in the enquiries I made relative to your fortune, I was only interested on your account; no selfish consideration ever influenced my mind. In my Jessica I beheld native worth, and this was all to me, though, independent of this, she has graces to captivate the heart of any man.

But however poets and philosophers may rail at riches, daily experience

proves that such a portion of them as will at least procure us the comforts of life, are necessary to our happiness.

" You see me now busily employed in preparing papers which are to ensure to you the possession of an estate; it is but a small one indeed, situated in the neighbourhood of Naples, and was bequeathed to me by my grandfather. He saw that riches were not always conducive to happiness, in one fatal instance; no, they cannot confer felicity, though it will never exist without a competence.

" Should I then be taken from you my love, since we are all liable to the various accidents of life, and to death, the common lot most liable, I trust you are raised above want, and I hope that during the short time I have been blessed by the possession of my Jessica, I have never lost sight of the injunction which I received from our departed friend. Hitherto I

have endeavoured to deserve her love, and to preserve her happiness." At the last word happiness, Valdesa rose from his seat, and walked to the chimney piece, across which he leaned. The agitation of his mind betrayed itself in his countenance; he heaved a deep sigh, and walked several times across the apartment; complained of a head ache, then took up a book that laid near him. Jessica remarked that he did not read, and seemed scarcely sensible that he held the book in his hand. She again tenderly enquired of him the cause of his uneasiness.

"Do not," added she, "suppose that I wish to intrude myself on your confidence, though where interests are so closely connected, a want of openness must, I am persuaded, be destructive to happiness; yet I would never wish to extort that which is not voluntarily given; but I cannot, indeed I cannot, bear to see you thus miserable. Our

poor friend is no more, my brother has forgotten me, you are all the world to me, and my every shadow of comfort dependent on you."

"Do not," said Valdesa, "thus distress me with enquiries. I am not well, Jessica, in a little time I shall be better, you shall then be acquainted with the cause." Unwilling to importune him longer on a subject which he so evidently avoided, Jessica left the room and retired to her own.

The whole conversation had turned on serious and very different topics from those on which they generally conversed, and seemed preparatory to some important event. She thought on Mr. Hanbury, and her tears again flowed; "Yet my husband loves me," she said, "has not his affection for me shewn itself in every word and action? supported by that, why should I be unhappy? perfect and unalloyed felicity is not a draught for mortals; would Valdesa open to me

his whole heart, I should then have no wish ungratified."

Valdesa soon after joined her, and proposed a walk. They set out for that purpose, and as they were returning observed the figure of an old gentleman seated by the river side, which attracted their attention by the singularity of it's appearance.

His head was leaned on his hand, which rested on one knee, and there was in his countenance an expression that indicated excessive wretchedness, yet he seemed, from his air and mode of dress, to belong to the higher class of society.

"There," said Jessica, "misery seems to dwell divested of poverty; for if I might judge by the expression of that face, I should suppose that sorrow was no stranger to the heart."

They had by this time approached so near him that Valdesa was prevented making any reply. He did not, however, raise his head, but sat apparently

lost in thought, his eye fixed on the ground, as if insensible to all that passed.

"I think," said Valdesa, after they had retired to some distance, "that gentleman has not long resided here, and, if I mistake not, he is the same whom I saw alight from his carriage, at the English hotel a few mornings since, for he then struck me as appearing out of health, or very unhappy; but to the former cause I attributed the languor of his manner on speaking to his servant."

Here the conversation terminated, and they passed on.

END OF VOL. I.

Brooke, Printer, Paternoster-Row.

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